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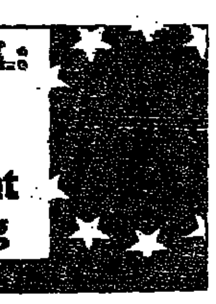

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THE EYE

THE INDEPENDENT

Newspaper of the Year for photographs

Thursday 30 April 1998 45p (IR 50p) No 3,598

Today's news

US frees death plot Britons

TWO Britons jailed for their part in a plot to murder of a US district attorney have been freed. Susan Hagan and Sally-Anne Croft were sentenced to five years in 1995 for conspiracy to murder Charles Turner, after being extradited from Britain. They were members of the Bhagwan Rajneesh commune in Oregon at the time of the killing in 1985. US lawyers last night said Hagan, 50, an aromatherapist from Bedmond, Hertfordshire, and Sally-Anne Croft, 47 a chartered accountant from Totnes, Devon, had both been released from prison.

Mardi Gra: brothers held

TWO BROTHERS in their sixties were being questioned by police last night in connection with the Mardi Gra bombings in the London area. The arrests followed a huge police surveillance operation. The men face allegations of demanding money with menaces, explosive offences and using firearms. Page 2

Swimmer's denial

TRIPLE Olympic gold-medal winner Michelle De Bruin yesterday used a press conference in Dublin to flatly reject suggestions from the international swimming body FINA that she tampered with a urine sample when a dope test was taken in January this year. The allegations accuse her of taking advantage of "a banned procedure", using a banned substance, and actions which affected a urine sample. Page 5

ANC visit Maze

LOOKING at the bleak walls of The Maze prison in Northern Ireland gave two visiting South Africans a sense of *déjà vu*: the ANC delegates had suffered at the hands of the apartheid regime, and they hoped now to help in the release of "political prisoners" in Northern Ireland. Page 2

Italy's MPs pitch in

FOOTBALL violence was high on the agenda in the Italian Lower House yesterday but not as a topic for debate: ushers struggled to restrain furious MPs as insults and fists flew during a short but passionate exchange about contested decisions by first division referees. Page 13

Flood of doom

JOSE Maria Bustillo, 59, has been working his five-hectare plot for 30 years. Four hectares of it are now coated with toxic mud that burst from a mine reservoir and cascaded down the valley at the weekend, threatening Spain's most important nature reserve downstream. Page 14

Business news

Beans mean cash

THE market for stylish coffee bars received a boost yesterday when Seattle Coffee Company, the UK chain of 56 coffee shops was taken over in a £49m deal by Starbucks, an American chain with 1600 outlets. Owners Ally and Scott Svenson will net £15m from the deal. Page 22

Sports news

Middlesex victory

KEITH BROWN hit a century to help Middlesex to victory by six runs over Sussex in a Benson and Hedges Cup match at Lord's. Warwickshire beat Lancashire by 49 runs and Northamptonshire beat the Minor Counties by five wickets. Franklyn Rose, Northamptonshire's Jamaican fast bowler, established a county record in the competition by taking five wickets for just 14 runs. Page 29

18 9 770951 946542

High-level protest: Members of the police climbing squad arresting Kate, a student, after she scaled the Department of Trade and Industry building in London yesterday in protest against the sale of arms to the Turkish, Indonesian and Saudi Arabian governments Photograph: Richard Lewis

Blair anger at 'repugnant' Mary Bell deal

By Ian Burrell
Home Affairs Correspondent

IN A powerfully worded attack, Tony Blair said yesterday that it was "inherently repugnant" that people such as the child-killer Mary Bell should make money from books about their crimes.

The Prime Minister, who had not spoken publicly about the Bell case before, said during an interview: "I can't believe it's right." And he indicated he would like the law changed to ban certain categories of criminal from benefiting commercially from books about their offences.

During a question-and-answer session on the Internet at Downing Street, and again later in response to a question in the House of Commons, Mr Blair used strong language to condemn the payments to Bell But he stopped short of criticising Rupert Murdoch, the owner of the *Times*, which is paying to serialise the book, *Cries Unheard*, by Gitta Sereny. The author is understood to have paid Bell around £50,000 for her help with the book.

Last night, the Attorney General's office announced that it was "examining the possibility" of blocking the payments to Bell in the public interest.

Mary Bell was jailed in 1968 at the age of 11, for the killings of two boys, Martin Brown, aged four, and Brian Howe, three, in the Scotswood area of Newcastle upon Tyne. She is now 41 and lives in legally protected anonymity with her 14-year-old daughter.

During the Internet interview – conducted by Sir David Frost – in which Mr Blair answered questions from the public, the Prime Minister said: "I just think it's plain wrong for anyone to make money out of what has been the most heinous and appalling crime ...

"I cannot instinctively feel it is right that someone makes money out of a book written about crimes that were absolutely appalling. I don't think it's justifiable. I can't justify it. We must look at whether the law needs to be tightened."

He said the present law prevented people making money from writing about a crime within a specified period of six years. "The question is whether, in respect maybe of certain categories, it should be said you should never be able to make a profit out of crime," he added. "There seems to be something inherently repugnant about that. I can't believe it's right. We are looking at it."

Earlier yesterday, the mother of one of Bell's victims, June Richardson, was given personal assurances by the Home Secretary, Jack Straw, that he was looking "very urgently" at the law to stop offenders making profits from their crimes.

She said that 30 years after the death of her four-year-old son Martin, the controversy over a book on the killer's life was now bringing back painful memories. "I think no one should be able to profit from crime. I think there's got to be a law brought out as soon as possible to stop it ever happening to other victims," she said.

"I can't forgive [Bell] for the life I've had to lead and the life I'm leading at the moment."

Gitta Sereny, who said the payment to Bell was less than £50,000, defended her book by saying it would help the public to understand why people like Bell – who she described as a "horribly damaged child" – acted as they did.

"Breaking points exist and we have to learn how they come about, and that is what we are learning through Mary, with Mary's help, because she is very intelligent and she has really devoted herself, if you like, to helping to establish this," she said.

A solicitor who acted for the father of the murdered toddler Jamie Bulger agreed with Sereny that the book could help Mrs Richardson. Rex Makin, who has represented Ralph Bulger, said: "She may find some solace and comfort when she knows what went on in the mind of the girl and also to know what her background was."

But yesterday the support group Mothers Against Murder and Aggression announced a letter-writing campaign calling on large bookstores not to sell the book. Mrs Richardson will support a protest by the group in Newcastle on Saturday.

Blair on the Net, page 10
Leading article, page 20

Dental warning to pregnant women

By Jeremy Laurance
Health Editor

WOMEN were advised yesterday against having dental amalgam fillings during pregnancy to avoid causing possible harm to the unborn foetus.

The health department issued the warning because of the "theoretical risk" that mercury vapour released during the drilling and filling could reach and cross the placenta. Temporary fillings and those using other materials are not involved.

However, it stressed that this was a purely precautionary measure and there was no evidence that the fillings could harm an unborn child. The advice from the Government's Chief Dental Officer, Robin Wild, and Deputy Chief Medical Officer, Jeremy Metters, follows a statement from the Committee on Toxicity of Chemicals in Food, Consumer Products and the Environment (COT) on the toxicity of dental amalgam.

The committee concluded that there was no evidence of "systemic toxicity" (mercury entering the bloodstream) from amalgam fillings, but says it may be prudent to avoid fillings during pregnancy, where possible, until further research has been done.

The committee considered the matter after disagreements among some scientists and dentists over the safety of dental treatment in pregnancy. Margaret Cameron, a biologist and Scots president of the charity Foresight, which helps women with pregnancy problems, called last year for a ban on amalgam fillings in pregnancy and advised pregnant women who worked in dental surgeries to find other jobs.

Women are granted free NHS dental care during pregnancy because the hormonal changes are known to make them more prone to tooth decay. Many take the opportunity to have their teeth fixed so they can escape NHS charges for treatment.

In a letter sent to all dentists, GPs and NHS Trusts yesterday, Mr Wild and Dr Metters say that COT last considered the safety of dental amalgam in 1986. They say the committee's conclusion on that occasion, that there was no evidence of harm apart from a very few cases of hypersensitivity, is unchanged.

"As a precautionary measure, however, COT advise that it may be prudent to avoid, where clinically reasonable, the placement or removal of amalgam fillings during pregnancy ...

"Mothers may be reassured that COT found no evidence of harm to children from the treatment of their mothers with dental amalgam during pregnancy. However, it is now generally accepted that women should avoid unnecessary medical interventions during pregnancy in order to minimise any possible risks to the health of the foetus ...

The letter continues: "Ultimately it will, of course, be for the patient to decide how she should be treated in the light of her dentist's advice."

Temper tantrums as Labour's top fund-raisers fall out over 'blind trusts'

By Fran Abrams
Political Correspondent

TONY Blair's chief fund-raiser threw a Labour Party consultant out of his north London mansion after a row over the party's "blind trusts", it was claimed yesterday.

The Prime Minister was later forced to deny allegations by the consultant, Henry Drucker, that he must have known the identities of "anonymous" donors to his office through such a trust.

Dr Drucker said the millionaire record producer Michael Levy – now Lord Levy – was "very angry" after he said the trusts should be scrapped. Speaking to the Neill committee on political funding, Dr Drucker described the trusts as "evil".

Dr Drucker, who raised £340m for Oxford University, was approached by Labour in 1996 to look for new, large donors. But an initial survey showed potential benefactors were put off by the existence of blind trusts, which paid for Shadow Cabinet members' offices, he said.

In a draft report, Dr Drucker recommended that Labour would raise more money if it got rid of them, he told the Neill inquiry. "I was outgunned by Michael Levy ... he wasn't having it and that was it," he said.

Outside the hearing, he described the scene when he went to an early morning meeting at Mr Levy's impressive modern house in Totteridge. No sooner had he and a colleague entered than the senior fund-raiser, who was also Tony Blair's tennis partner, began shouting at him. "He stood up. He shouted. The whole meeting was conducted in shouts," he said.

Dr Drucker's fund-raising suggestions were rejected a few days after the meeting and he parted company with Labour, he said.

"I don't believe that these people would have given a bean unless there were enough nods and winks that Tony was, of course, very grateful, that they were assured that this was the case," he said.

Henry Drucker: Row over trusts

Asked about the claim at Prime Minister's Questions, Tony Blair denied that he or his colleagues knew the source of their funding.

Tony's cronies, page 17

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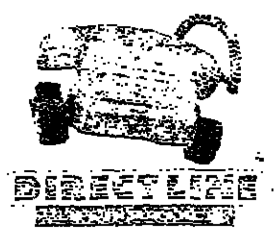

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INSIDE GUIDE: WEATHER, P2 ● CROSSWORDS, P30 AND EYE, P10 ● SPORT, P27-30 ● TODAY'S TELEVISION, EYE P12 ● FULL CONTENTS, P2

TOMORROW IN THE EYE

28 pages of film and music

■ It's a Scream – Ryan Gilbey on film

PLUS

■ Whatsisname? The world's great character actors

■ Nick Coleman on a makeover for 'Top of the Pops'

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NEWSPAPERS SUPPORT RECYCLING

Recycled paper made up 41.4% of the raw material for UK newspapers in the first half of 1997.

Mandela's men visit IRA prisoners

By Kim Sengupta
in Belfast

STANDING in a windswept concrete car park looking at the bleak grey walls of The Maze gave the visiting South Africans a sense of *déjà vu* they said. It reminded them of Robben Island. The two senior ANC delegates had suffered at the hands of the apartheid regime, and they hoped to help in the release of "political prisoners" in Northern Ireland.

Cyril Ramaphosa and Mathews Phosa are now influential figures in the new South Africa, and are close to President Nelson Mandela. They are part of an ANC delegation in Northern Ireland to advise on conflict negotiations, and aid in the final drive towards a peace settlement.

The two men were taken by Sinn Fein officials into the Maze to meet IRA prisoners. Mr Phosa was guerrilla commander in the ANC's armed wing *Umkhonto We Sizwe* (The Spear of the Nation) during the liberation war. He is now the ANC's chief legal officer and Prime Minister of Mpumalanga, the former Eastern Transvaal.

He said: "Political prisoners are stakeholders in the process of peace in the land, and they should be allowed to have a full part in building this peace. They have an important part to play, and a lot to contribute.

"This gives us a sense of *déjà vu*. We know about the experiences of the wives and relations of the prisoners, they are the same feelings as in Robben Island. There should not be any political prisoners anywhere."

Another struggle: Former IRA bomber Gerry Kelly with Cyril Ramaphosa outside the Maze prison yesterday Photograph: Brian Harris

Mr Ramaphosa, the ANC's chief negotiator during talks with the apartheid government, said that the delegation hoped to share their experience of talking with the enemy with the various parties involved in the Ulster talks.

Mr Ramaphosa, who was jailed twice by the Pretoria regime, will lead the delegates to a series of meetings in Northern Ireland and Dublin. Other influential members include Transport Minister Mac Maharaj, who was incarcerated at Robben Island with Nelson Mandela, and local government minister Valli Moosa.

The ANC group had been invited to Northern Ireland by Sinn Fein. This follows an Irish conference held in South Africa last May which was attended by 30 delegates from the various parties taking part in the peace talks.

There had been private expressions of irritation among some unionists politicians over the visit, which at the outset appeared to be totally immersed in republican campaign issues, including a visit to meet residents groups in Derry's Bogside, relations of the victims of Bloody Sunday, and also Catholics who live on the Garvachy Road in Portadown, affected by the Protestant Drumcree marches.

One unionist politician, asked whether there were plans to meet the ANC team, is said to have replied half jocularly, "it's bad enough having to sit down with one set of terrorists, without having to meet another lot as well."

However, Mr Phosa revealed yesterday that meetings were due to take place with the Ulster Unionist leader David Trimble and David Ervine of the Progressive Unionist Party.

Brothers suspects in Mardi Gra hunt

By Jason Bennetto
Crime Correspondent

TWO brothers in their 60s were being questioned last night in connection with the "Mardi Gra" bombings following a huge surveillance operation.

The suspects face allegations of demanding money with menaces, explosive offences and using firearms with intent to endanger life.

They were arrested during a series of house raids in London on Tuesday night in a Scotland Yard operation that including anti-terrorist officers. A third man in his 30s was also arrested, but was released on police bail yesterday afternoon.

More than £1m has been spent on trying to capture the self styled Mardi Gra bomber who has struck 36 times in a series of home-made bullet bomb attacks usually against branches of Barclays Bank and Sainsbury's stores in the south-east of England.

Only one person has been seriously injured, but police believed the attacks were becoming more deadly after a 17-year-old was hit in the leg with shotgun pellets last month at Forest Hill, south east London.

The extortionist, or extortionists, believed to have has asked for a £500,000 pay-off, first struck in December 1994 when packages were sent to six London branches of Barclays. The first two went off causing slight burns to employees, the others were defused.

In most of the cases the bombs were simple devices that automatically triggered a shotgun cartridge when the box was opened.

The bomber has avoided being filmed on security cameras and left few clues in evading detectives for more than three years, leading to suggestions that he could have links with the police. None of the men arrested on Tuesday night is thought to have been a serving or former policeman.

After the initial attack the bomber struck a further 19 times in the following 14 months. The attacks switched to Sainsbury's in November 1996, and he struck three times on one day at three branches of the superstore in November last year.

Sharp rise in complaints over RUC conduct

By David McKittrick
Ireland Correspondent

A DRAMATIC rise in the number of complaints against the Royal Ulster Constabulary was disclosed yesterday. Many involve incidents which occurred during marching season controversies.

The number of complaints lodged in 1997 was 3,111, a new record, representing a rise of 22 per cent compared with the previous year. This means the period from 1995 to 1997 has seen an increase of one-third.

The statistics provide one illustration of the scale of the task facing former Hong Kong governor Chris Patten, who is to take on the task of reviewing Northern Ireland's future policing needs.

The steep rise in complaints is paralleled by opinion poll results which indicate a severe drop in Catholic and nationalist confidence in the RUC. At one point, two-thirds of Catholics said they believed the police treat Protestants better than Catholics.

The figures also show that more than 1,000 investigations into police officers completed in 1997 resulted in only seven cases with a formal disciplinary.

Presenting the figures yesterday, the Independent Commission for Police Complaints argued that the increases might not indicate a decline in the standards of police conduct but rather a growing confidence in the complaints system.

But this argument is not taken seriously by most observers. The ICPC itself is not widely known to the public and is regarded as having its own recognition and credibility problems. It is to be replaced by a new Police Ombudsman next year.

The ICPC said it was increasingly concerned about the problems of identifying officers belonging to mobile support units deployed to deal with riot situations and warned that new Ombudsman had to be adequately funded.

SDLP spokesman Alex Attwood said: "These figures again prove conclusively that the present complaint system is fundamentally flawed, with ridiculously low levels of formal disciplinary outcomes against members of the RUC."

In London last night, ministers were accused by Peter Robinson, Ian Paisley's deputy in the Democratic Unionist Party, of using a political agenda at the Maze prison in Ulster to "whitewash" over incompetence among staff.

Mr Robinson, who is opposed to the peace settlement, made the allegations in a face-to-face confrontation with Alan Shannon, chief executive of the Northern Ireland prison service, at a Commons hearing of the select committee on the Province at Westminster.

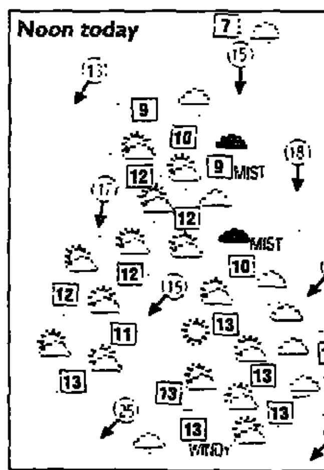
The DUP deputy leader told Mr Shannon: "The pay off for operating a political agenda which suits your ministers is incompetence... It has whitewashed people and not made them culpable for their inefficiency in their prison."

Mr Robinson cited the killing of Billy Wright, the Loyalist paramilitary, inside the Maze and the escape of a prisoner in women's clothes as examples of lapses in security, which he said were a consequence of running the prison on a political agenda.

If those lapses in security had taken place in any other UK prison, there would have been a full public inquiry, Mr Robinson said. But Mr Shannon denied the charges and said the inquiry into the Maze found that "the events were not a matter of culpability".

WEATHER

Noon today



The eastern half of both Scotland and England will be dull and misty with some light rain or drizzle at times, and there will also be a cool north-easterly wind. However, away from the coast the cloud will slowly break up with a few sunny spells developing. The western half of the UK will see some long spells of sunshine with just a slight risk of a light shower. The showers will be mainly in south-western parts of England and over the Scottish mountains.

Outlook for the next few days

A band of cloud will slowly cross Scotland tomorrow bringing a little light rain to some northern and western parts. The cloud will break up as it moves south to allow some decent sunshine in the south and east of Scotland. Low cloud, fog and drizzle will clear from eastern coasts of Scotland but eastern coasts of England will continue to be affected by this. Saturday and Sunday will be generally fine and dry across the UK with some sunny spells in most parts.

British Isles weather

most recent available figure at noon local time
C,cloudy; Cl,clear; F,fair; Fg,fog; Hz,haze; M,mist; R,rain; S,sunny; Sl,sleet; Sh,showers; Sn,snow; Th,thunder

Aberdeen	C	9	48	Guernsey	R	11	52
Anglesey	C	15	59	Inverness	C	12	54
Ayr	C	14	57	Ipswich	C	14	57
Belfast	F	13	55	Isles of Scilly	R	10	50
Birmingham	Sh	14	57	Jersey	R	11	52
Blackpool	F	15	59	Liverpool	C	15	59
Bournemouth	C	13	55	London	C	15	59
Brighton	C	13	55	Manchester	C	15	59
Bristol	C	15	59	Newcastle	F	13	55
Cardiff	Sh	13	55	Oxford	C	15	59
Carlisle	F	14	57	Plymouth	R	10	50
Dover	C	14	57	Scarborough	C	11	52
Dublin	C	12	54	Southampton	Sh	15	59
Edinburgh	C	9	48	Southend	n/a	13	55
Exeter	Sh	11	52	Stornoway	Th	11	52
Glasgow	C	13	55	York	C	14	57

Air quality

Yesterday's readings

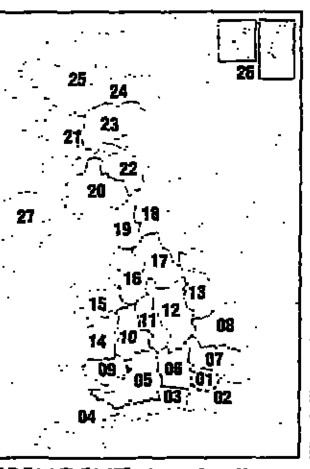
	NO_2	SO_2
London	Moderate	Good
S England	Good	Good
Wales	Good	Good
C England	Good	Good
N England	Good	Good
Scotland	Good	Good
N Ireland	Good	Good

Outlook for today

London	Good	Good
S England	Good	Good
Wales	Good	Good
C England	Good	Good
N England	Good	Good
Scotland	Good	Good
N Ireland	Good	Good

Out and about with AA Roadwatch

Call **0336 401777** for the latest local and national traffic news. Source: The Automobile Association. Calls charged at 50p per min at all times (inc VAT)



INDEPENDENT **Weatherline**

For the latest forecasts dial **0891 5009** followed by the two digits for your area indicated by the above map. Source: Met Office

High tides

	AM	HT	PM	HT
London	05.15	7.6	17.40	7.2
Liverpool	02.29	9.5	14.54	9.3
Avonmouth	10.47	13.2	23.03	12.9
Hull (Albert Dock)	09.45	8.7	22.12	5.6
Greenock	03.44	3.5	16.18	3.4
Dun Laoghaire	02.49	4.2	15.19	4.1

Height measured in metres

Lighting-up times

Belfast	20.55	to	05.46
Birmingham	20.32	to	05.37
Bristol	20.31	to	05.43
Glasgow	20.53	to	05.34
London	20.22	to	05.33
Manchester	20.37	to	05.35
Newcastle	20.29	to	05.27

Sun & moon

Sun rises	05.35
Sun sets	20.22
Moon rises	08.58
Moon sets	—

First Quarter May 3

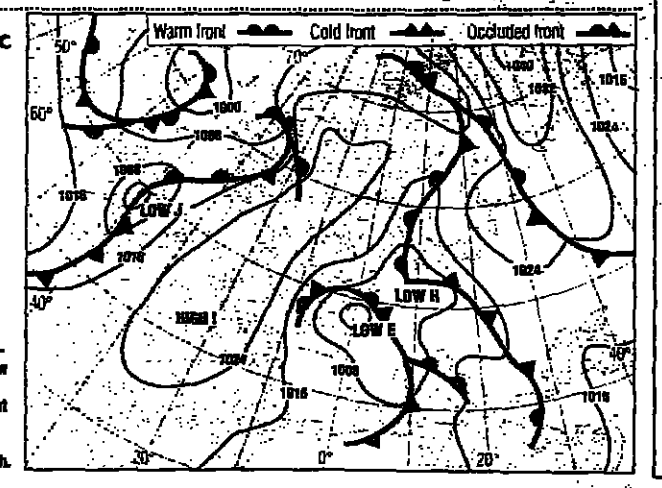
World weather

most recent available figure at noon local time

Akrotiri	F	20	68	Buenos Aires	C	16	61	Honolulu	F	25	77	Mexico City	S	26	79	Riyadh	C	30	86
Alexandria	F	25	52	Cairo	S	29	84	Istanbul	F	18	64	Miami	C	28	82	Rome	F	17	63
Algiers	F	25	77	Calgary	C	20	68	Jakarta	F	32	90	Milan	C	19	66	Salzburg	F	13	55
Alicante	R	17	63	Cape Town	S	28	92	Jeddah	F	37	99	Mombasa	C	28	82	San Fran	M	17	63
Amsterdam	S	16	61	Caracas	S	31	88	Jerusalem	S	23	73	Montreal	S	13	55	Santiago	C	19	66
Anchorage	C	3	37	Casablanca	F	22	72	Jo'burg	S	23	73	Moscow	S	22	72	Seoul	C	22	72
Athens	R	15	59	Chicago	C	13	55	Karachi	F	32	90	Munich	C	10	50	Singapore	C	33	91
Auckland	F	18	64	Christchurch	C	11	52	Kathmandu	F	26	79	Nairobi	C	25	77	Stockholm	S	21	70
Bahrain	C	31	88	Cologne	F	17	63	Kiev	S	19	65	Naples	F	15	59	Strasbourg	F	16	61
Bangkok	C	37	99	Copenhagen	M	13	55	Kingston	S	32	90	Nassau	C	27	81	Sydney	F	22	72
Barbados	F	29	84	Corfu	F	17	63	Kuala Lumpur	C	33	91	New Delhi	F	36	97	T'aipei	C	25	77
Barcelona	C	18	64	Crete	C	16	61	Las Palmas	C	21	70	New Orleans	C	20	68	Tel Aviv	S	25	77
Beirut	F	21	70	Dakar	S	25	77	Lima	S	23	73	New York	F	12	54	Tenerife	C	24	75
Belgrade	C	15	54	Darwin	S	32	90	Lisbon	F	16	61	Nice	C	15	59	Tokyo	S	24	75
Berlin	C	20	68	Dhahran	C	31	88	Locarno	C	13	55	Nicosia	F	22	72	Toronto	S	13	55
Bermuda	F	20	65	Faro	C	17	63	Los Angeles	F	17	63	Oslo	M	10	50	Tunis	F	23	73
Biarritz	F	16	61	Florence	R	12	54	Luxembourg	C	15	59	Paris	R	16	61	Valencia	C	19	66
Bogota	C	21	70	Frankfurt	C	13	55	Madrid	F	15	59	Peking	R	14	57	Vancouver	C	15	59
Bombay	F	31	88	Funchal	C	20	68	Majorca	Dr	15	59	Perth	F	21	70	Venice	C	14	57
Bordeaux	C	13	55	Geneva	C	13	55	Malaga	C	21	70	Port Stanley	C	7	45	Vienna	C	18	64
Brisbane	C	24	75	Gibraltar	C	18	64	Malta	S	18	64	Prague	C	20	68	Warsaw	F	21	70
Brussels	F	16	61	Harare	S	25	77	Manila	F	34	93	Reykjavik	C	6	43	Washington	C	14	57
Bucharest	C	14	57	Helsinki	S	22	72	Mecca	F	39	102	Rhodes	F	19	66	Wellington	F	16	61
Budapest	C	19	66	Hong Kong	C	27	81	Melbourne	P	11	52	Rio de Jan	C	25	79	Zurich	C	10	50

Atlantic chart, noon today

High I will intensify and transfer northeastwards. Low E will fill and move south but Low H is slow moving. Low J will move north.



WILLIAM HARTSTON

WEATHER WISE

WHEN you are caught in a shower and spot a convenient ombrifuge*, should you run to it or walk? Most of us run to shelter as quickly as we can, reasoning that the longer we spend in the rain, the wetter we will get, but as a new book makes clear, running is not always the driest policy.

Why do Buses Come in Threes? by Rob Eastaway and Jeremy Wyndham (Robson Books, £12.95) is about the mathematics of real life, including such puzzles as why showers are always too hot or too cold, and where is the best place to see Nelson at the top of his column. (It's next to the statue of Charles I on a horse, if you're interested.)

Back to the question of running in the rain, the answer is that you're always better off running if there's no wind, but it becomes more complicated if the rain falls at an angle.

In that case, you have to consider the ratio between your areas viewed from above and from the side (to take account of the rain falling down on you and the rain hitting you from behind or *in front*). The mathematics show that if the rain is falling at an angle of more than about 15° to the vertical, and your top area is about a fifth of your side area, then your best strategy for keeping relatively dry is to move at exactly the same horizontal speed as the rain. Your head and shoulders may then get wetter than if you were moving faster, but it is more than compensated by the dryness of your back and front.

**ombrifuge (n): a place of shelter from the rain.*

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Ministers join attack on 'greedy' lawyers

By Ian Burrell and Jeremy Laurance

THE WAR between the Government and the legal profession escalated yesterday as two cabinet ministers launched scathing attacks on the perceived greed of criminal and medical lawyers.

Jack Straw, the Home Secretary, accused crime lawyers of "using their imagination" to boost their legal aid fees by dragging out cases. He said they were creating an "adjournment culture" by giving "ridiculous reasons" for postponing hearings.

Joining the attack, Frank Dobson, Secretary of State for Health, said medical negligence claims had cost the NHS £235m in 1996-97 – a 17 per cent increase on the previous year. "Every pound spent in the courtroom is a pound not spent on patient care. We must do everything we can to keep lawyers out of hospitals and keep the doctors, midwives and other health professionals out of court so they can concentrate on patients," he said.

The criticisms follows the publication yesterday, by Lord Irvine, the Lord Chancellor, of a list of barristers and solicitors earning between £190,000 and £670,000 a year from legal aid work. The "name and shame" exercise, which especially highlighted the earnings of personal injury lawyers, was seen as an attempt to soften up the profession for proposed cuts in the £1.4bn legal aid budget.

Lord Irvine plans to end legal aid for personal injury cases this summer and replace it with conditional "no win, no fee" agreements.

Yesterday, Geoff Hoon, a minister at the Lord Chancellor's Department, told the Law Society's legal aid conference that the system was "frozen in the 1950s".

He said: "We must develop modern ways of paying for legal services. Conditional fees offer part of the answer. Where litigation can be funded in other ways, legal aid can be removed without any reduction in access to justice."

Mr Hoon claimed that since 1990-91 the average cost to the taxpayer of a legal aid case had increased by 53 per cent above inflation.

Mr Dobson's comments were made at the Royal College of Midwives annual conference in Bournemouth.

Figures out yesterday from the Medical Defence Union, which insures 80,000 GPs and hospital doctors in the UK, showed claims rising at 15 per cent a year.

The trends, which have alarmed ministers, suggest the cost of litigation is doubling every five years. Mr Dobson announced that he was writing to a range of medical organisations to seek their views on how to stop unnecessary litigation sapping NHS resources.

Mr Straw's criticisms, made in an interview with *The Law Society Gazette*, prompted an angry response from Law Society president Phillip Sycamore who said the Home Secretary showed a "depressing lack of understanding of the legal aid fees system".

Mr Straw does, however, have the benefit of personal experience. As a criminal barrister in the 1970s, he saw the system at first hand. He said: "Amongst quite a lot of solicitors the game has become more ritualised."

First Lady of the Footsie: Marjorie Scardino, head of Pearson, oversees a workforce of 18,000 and a business worth £5bn on the stock market

Photograph: Neville Elder

New accolade for First Lady of the Footsie

SHE has been called the First Lady of the Footsie. Now Marjorie Scardino, the first woman to head one of the country's top 100 companies, has been named businesswoman of the year, **writes Clare Garner.**

Ms Scardino, 51, chief executive of the international media group Pearson, which publishes the *Financial Times* and owns Madame Tussaud's, was yesterday presented with the Veuve Clicquot Businesswoman Of The Year award, the most coveted accolade in the field.

The Texan-born mother of three, who took the helm at Pearson in January last year, said she was "immensely flattered". She felt sure other female chief executives of FTSE 100 firms would follow in her footsteps. "Women are making steady... progress in business as more companies recognise the danger of trying to attract the best talent while dipping into only half the pool. Women are taking their places alongside men in a business world that is changing faster than most of us ever envisioned. We are all working to raise the standards through competition and open markets."

Yesterday it was Ms Scardino's turn to bask in the limelight, a thrill more recently enjoyed by her 12-year-old son Hal, who has appeared in a number of Hollywood films.

Ms Scardino has spent most of her working life in the media. She started out as a cub reporter with the Associated Press news agency in Washington, where she met her husband, the Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist Albert Scardino. The couple live in a flat near the Victoria and Albert Museum in west London.

IN THE NEWS

MARJORIE SCARDINO

Later she trained as a lawyer and moved to Savannah, Georgia, where she became a managing partner at a law firm.

She and her husband founded and published the *Georgia Gazette* newspaper. On arriving at Pearson she promised a 10-per-cent earnings growth year on year for five years and predicted that the group's stock market valuation would double in the same period. In 12 months the stock market price rose by 45 per cent.

Colleagues say she is good at motivating people and fond of plain speaking. "She's a good, punchy American woman: nice, attractive, obviously ambitious and going somewhere," said one. "She's quite aggressive, but charmingly. She doesn't shout at anybody." It was reported that she earned £825,115 for her first year at Pearson, although she is reticent about her salary. "I don't have a contract as good as Alan Shearer. Money is not a prime motivating factor," she insisted last year.

Ms Scardino oversees a workforce of 18,000 and a business worth more than £5bn on the stock market.

She writes "Dear Everyone" letters to staff about important events and recently wrote to all colleagues that "these goals are going to be stretched and are going to require every business to be in top form." Among her interests outside work are playing golf and supporting Manchester United - at the behest of her sons. She has even suggested that she plays video games to unwind.

OTHERS SHORTLISTED

Christian Rucker, 28, who runs the fast-growing mail order firm White Company; Saatchi & Saatchi's joint chief executive Tamara Ingram; Janis Wong, managing director of BAA London Gatwick; and Jill Sinclair, managing director of the SPZ Group, which operates in the music business.

PREVIOUS WINNERS

1997 – Nicola Foulston, Brands Hatch Leisure chief.
1996 – Janet Holmes à Court, who took over the running of her husband's £350m Heytesbury Holdings after his death from a heart attack in 1990
1995 – Patricia Vaz, head of British Telecom's payphones department.
1993 – Patsy Bloom, head of animal health insurers Pet Plan.

Mystery stabbing of heir to the house of Dunhill

A violent attack shows how a one-time high-roller has hit more frugal times. **Andrew Buncombe** reports

THERE was a time when you might have found a bright red Lamborghini sports car parked outside Christopher Dunhill's house. Yesterday outside his latest residence, a pub in the East End of London, there was a pale green seafood barrow. It was locked up.

Mr Dunhill, the eldest son of the chairman of Alfred Dunhill Ltd, was in the pub late on Monday night when he was repeatedly stabbed in the head, neck and stomach. The 44-year-old was rushed to hospital where he underwent emergency surgery for 12 stab wounds. Last night he was said to be in a serious but stable condition.

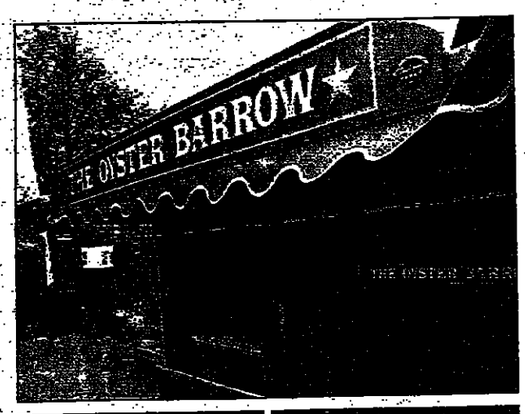
The stabbing, said to have been carried out by three men, is the latest twist in Mr Dunhill's colourful, headline-grabbing life. Once he was known as a playboy who lived the high-life. But more recently – after a string of setbacks – he has appeared to have hit more frugal times. The seafood barrow left propped up outside The House They Left Behind pub in London's Limehouse, is believed to have been his latest business venture.

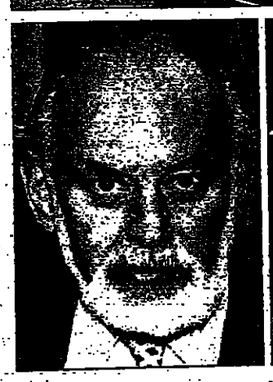
Mr Dunhill is the great-grandson of Alfred Dunhill, who in 1893 started the tobacco company that famously earned a warrant to supply cigarettes to the Royal Family. The company has since become part of a larger conglomerate, his tobacco interests having been sold, and it now concentrates on making luxury items sold in up-market boutiques and in duty-free stores – luggage, clothes and eau de toilette.

Contrary to some reports Mr Dunhill is not, any longer, the heir to a £1bn tobacco fortune. But as the eldest son of Richard Dunhill, now chairman of the luxury goods business, he was projected into a privileged way of life, and one which once allowed him to boast that he had snorted cocaine in Mrs Thatcher's bathroom.

He was once married to the actress Victoria Burgoyne, famous for her part in *Howards' Way* and the 1975 advertisement for Cadbury's Flake chocolate bar. Their marriage later collapsed.

But his marriage was just the start of a trail of misfortune that has led Mr Dunhill, the one-time playboy who was regularly photographed with models on his arm, to a rented flat above a pub.





Trail of misfortune: An oyster barrow (top) which is believed to be the latest business venture of Christopher Dunhill (right), and which stands outside the pub in east London where he was repeatedly stabbed on Monday night. His father, Richard Dunhill (left) is chairman of the luxury goods business Alfred Dunhill Ltd Main photograph: Adrian Dennis

At one time Mr Dunhill was behind a luxury car business that eventually crashed with huge debts. From there he moved into the advertising business, only to be declared bankrupt in 1981 with debts of more than £100,000.

But perhaps his greatest downfall concerned drugs. In 1987 a police raid on his then home in St John's Wood, north London, discovered a quantity of illegal drugs and £70,000 worth of tapestries which had been stolen from the auction house Christie's. He was given an 18-month prison sentence for supplying cocaine by Knightsbridge Crown Court. That term was later halved by the Court of Appeal and ran consecutively to a six-month sentence for handling stolen tapestries.

Mr Dunhill, who was expelled from Downside public school as a teenager for having a girl in his room, was again declared bankrupt in 1995, allegedly owing more than £3.5m to 16 creditors world-wide.

In the latest episode Mr Dunhill had been in the bar of the pub drinking after hours with the landlord Tony Fran when they were attacked by three men. Mr Fran, 32, was also stabbed, suffering wounds in his arm and buttocks. He was later discharged was from hospital. The three men were seen to escape in a dark car.

Whether Mr Dunhill or Mr Fran were the victims of planned and intentional attack was not clear last night. Police declined to comment on possible motives but said they were treating the incident as attempted murder.

"Inquiries are continuing and we are trying to track down any witnesses or anyone who saw the three men drive off the car," said a spokeswoman.

Last night Mr Dunhill's wife Nicki said she had been at her husband's bedside at the Royal London Hospital since he was admitted. She said: "His condition is stable and he will be discharged over the next couple of days."

A source at Alfred Dunhill Ltd said Mr Dunhill's father, and his brother Richard, who runs a business supplying seafood to many of London's restaurants, had also visited him in hospital.

"Of course Mr Dunhill is worried – wouldn't any parent be concerned about their children," said the source.

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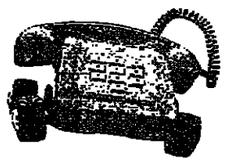

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Lawrence family hit out at police 'failures'

By Kathy Marks

THE parents of Stephen Lawrence broke off from the public inquiry into their son's death yesterday to launch a scathing attack on police, accusing them of insensitivity and incompetence.

Doreen and Neville Lawrence were incensed by claims from four detectives that Stephen's murder was not racially motivated and by one officer's description of Mrs Lawrence yesterday as aggressive, unsmiling and taciturn.

At a press conference convened near the inquiry offices at Elephant and Castle, south London, Mrs Lawrence said that, five years after her son was stabbed to death by a white gang, police were still giving "no consideration to our feelings as human beings".

In a statement read by her sister, Cheryl Sloley, she said: "I have been saying all along that the police were out there to protect the boys who murdered my son and not to ensure that they locked them up for the crime they committed."

Earlier, the inquiry was told of poor relations between the family and two liaison officers assigned to provide them with support and information.

One of the two, Det Sgt John Bevan, admitted that the police liaison had been a failure. "I was put into a difficult job, I gave it my all and, yes, I failed," he said. "I have got to accept some responsibility for that."

Cross-examined by Stephen Kamlish, counsel for the family, he agreed that when asked on a previous occasion whether he felt he had let the Lawrences down, he had replied: "Unfortunately, I think they let me down. I wanted to help and they wouldn't let me."

Det Sgt Bevan said Mrs Lawrence "adopted an aggressive stance" from the start and never smiled at him when he visited the house. "Even here, at this inquiry, I walk past Mrs Lawrence and she won't acknowledge me," he said.

The inquiry heard that Peter Bottomley, the family's MP, arranged a meeting with Sir Paul Condon, the Metropolitan Police Commissioner, because the Lawrences were so frustrated at the lack of information they were receiving from police.

Det Sgt Bevan, who acknowledged that he had no experience or training in police liaison, agreed that he had investigated Stephen's own background and said this was because, in most cases, murder victims were known to their assailants. But Mr Kamlish said: "You knew that Stephen had been killed in an unprovoked attack by five white racists who did not know him; that was as clear as daylight from day one."

"That was a strong assumption," Det Sgt Bevan replied.

At the press conference, Mrs Lawrence accused police of trying to shift responsibility on to the family for their failure to make arrests for two weeks. "As a family, we got in the way by asking questions," she said.

She said it also appeared that the liaison officers believed that she and her husband had not been grief-stricken. "They expected me as Stephen's mother to be making cups of tea and entertaining them when they visited our home," she said. "I would like to ask them, what were you expecting from a family whose child had just been murdered?"

The inquiry continues today.

A small war breaks out in the heart of England

Sword of honour: A corporal in Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry takes part in the Changing of the Guard at Buckingham Palace. The regiment will form a guard at the Palace for a month Photograph: Paul Hackett/Reuters

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Girl abused at Ashworth

A PAEDOPHILE housed in a secure hospital planned that fellow patients should distract staff so he could abuse a young girl who was visiting, an inquiry was told yesterday.

The allegation was made by a fellow patient to a nurse in the personality disorder unit of Ashworth Hospital, Merseyside. The nurse, Damien Marlow, told the hearing that the man who came to him with the claims – referred to as RM – said he had seen the same convicted paedophile sexually assaulting the child on a garden bench in the hospital.

Mr Marlow, who has worked at Ashworth for nine years, said RM made the allegations about Peter Hemming and the girl, referred to as child A.

In a statement to police recounted to the hearing at Knutsford Crown Court in Cheshire by counsel to the inquiry, John Royce QC, Mr Marlow said RM came to him first alleging that Hemming had threatened his life. During that conversation RM told him he had heard other patients saying Hemming had told them he was going to have sex with child A.

Mr Royce said the claims from RM had followed a search of his room, which had turned up nine pornographic videos and children's underwear.

The inquiry into the activities at Ashworth was told that RM had later retracted his allegations about Hemming after being questioned by police.

Another nurse told the hearing she had been concerned about the contact between Hemming and child A. Lisa Johnson said she started work on Lawrence Ward in September 1995 and had concerns about security there from day one. "I raised these concerns with other staff on the ward and the team leader on the ward and they were taken to the patient care team," she said. Asked if staff ever told Hemming not to have close contact with child A, she replied: "I cannot recall that."

By October 1996 she felt her verbal concerns were not being dealt with, so she put them in writing into a ward staff book.

Ms Johnson said she had also raised issues such as the discovery of 41 pornographic videos. She went on extended sick leave and since returning to work asked to be moved off the ward.

The hearing was told by a man referred to as patient E that on Lawrence Ward there had existed an "inner circle" of three men who controlled pornography distribution: Hemming, an unnamed patient and child killer Paul Corrigan. Corrigan had been due to make submissions to the inquiry yesterday, but declined to do so.

The hearing continues today.

Ten-year-old cars are prime target for thieves

CARS that are over 10 years old are 10 times more likely to be targeted by car thieves than newer models, according to a report published yesterday, **writes Jason Bennetto.**

More than 1,400 cars are stolen every day and almost 20 per cent of car owners are likely to be victims of car-related theft each year. A third of all stolen vehicles, worth £700m, are never recovered. But figures for 1997 show a 17 per cent drop in car crime which is believed to be due to improved security in modern cars.

Volkswagen's Passat was the hardest to steal, with Ford and Vauxhall cars also coming top in their classes, the Consumers' Association's *Car Security Guide* reveals. The cars most frequently stolen were old popular models such as the Metro, Fiesta, Escort, Sierra, Montego and the Maestro.

Couple accused of cruelty

A MAN and woman accused of cruelty to a 12-year-old boy who was allegedly found bound, gagged and covered in bruises during a police raid on a house in Poole, Dorset, were remanded in custody when they appeared in court yesterday.

The couple, a man aged 36 and a 31-year-old woman, appeared before magistrates after being questioned by police for more than two days. They are charged with cruelty to the boy, who cannot be named for legal reasons, causing him grievous bodily harm with intent, and false imprisonment.

Store cuts cost of sun lotions

SUN-TAN lotions are to be sold at cost price by a supermarket this summer in a bid to persuade more people to use them, it was announced yesterday, **writes Kate Watson-Smyth.**

The Co-op – which will sell top brands including Ambre Solaire, Piz Buin and Nivea for almost half the recommended retail price – said it was expecting to make a loss of "well into six figures" by the end of the summer. But a spokesman for the store said the company wanted to highlight the dangers of the sun. "By offering sun-protection creams at cost we're demonstrating our commitment to helping people protect themselves for the lowest price possible."

Awards for BBC presenters

JEREMY Paxman, of BBC2's *Newsnight*, and Sue McGregor of BBC Radio 4's *Today* programme's were awarded the television presenter and radio presenter of the year awards by the Voice of the Listener and Viewer lobby group yesterday. Television programme of the year was *Channel 4 News* and radio programme of the year was Radio 4's comedy quiz *I'm Sorry I Haven't a Clue*.

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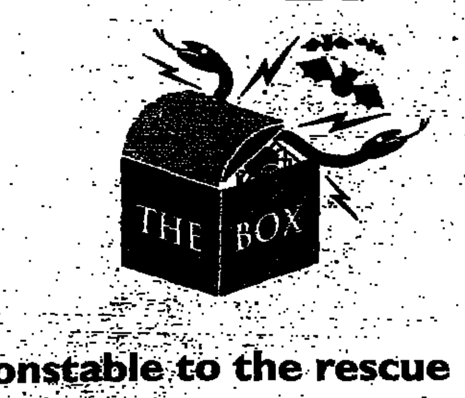


Constable to the rescue

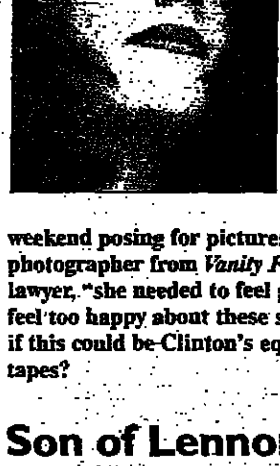
RECENTLY, Pandora reported on the fact that Margaret Beckett's lovely grace-and-favour flat in Admiralty House has a built-in alarm clock in the form of John Prescott, her *upstairs neighbour. Now it appears that the Minister* for Trade and Industry may have an even greater in-house amenity in the form of an original Constable painting that hangs in the sitting room. Experts will soon arrive to authenticate the picture. If it proves to be genuine, the Government might consider putting it up for sale. The proceeds would easily offset the hideously expensive costs of redecorating *Lord Irvine's apartment and put to rest,* finally, that tedious controversy.

Grouching Grouchos

THE GROUCHO Club has applied to extend its 1am closing license to 3am. Surprisingly, a Soho neighbour has made clear his opposition to these later hours, as if late-night Dean Street could be made any more raucous than it currently is by a few more inebriated television comics and over-emotional hacks. *More surprising, however, is the fact that the* objecting neighbour is also a Groucho Club member.

Zippergate snapshots

MATT DRUDGE, the controversial Internet investigative journalist who first broke the story of the alleged affair between Monica Lewinsky (pictured) and President Bill Clinton, has more news that should make the White House cringe. (Apparently there have been *some days when the Drudge Report registers more than* 2,000 "hits" from net surfers at the White House.)



Yesterday, Drudge revealed that Kenneth Starr, the special prosecutor who is investigating Clinton, now has more than 75 photographs of Clinton and former White House intern Lewinsky together. "They are jaw-dropping," says Drudge's source. *Apparently, most of these* pictures were obtained via supoena to the White House. Lewinsky, who spent last weekend posing for pictures on a Malibu beach or a photographer from *Vanity Fair* because according to her lawyer, "she needed to feel good about herself", cannot feel too happy about these snaps. And Pandora wonders if this could be Clinton's equivalent of the secret Nixon tapes?

Son of Lennon regrets

YOU MAY recall the fuss caused by a recent article in the *New Yorker* which quoted Sean Lennon as saying that he believed his father, John, was murdered by a United States government conspiracy. Now a family friend of the Lennons named Elliot Mintz has told the *New York Daily News* that Sean wishes he had never made the remark and that he asked the reporter to strike it from her story but she refused. Mintz does not believe Lennon's murder was a conspiracy and says, "It must be difficult for a son to understand why anyone would kill his father."

Treats for Clinton

PANDORA recently broke the story of President Clinton's visit to the G8 conference in Birmingham in June where he will be staying at the Swallow Hotel – why are you still laughing? Now it appears that Clinton and Blair – both big music fans – will be entertained by the rock group All Saints one evening during the conference. Pandora hopes the Spice Girls are not jealous of their all-girl group rivals who now move to centre stage at the thrilling festival. Cool Britannia.

Mumbling in the beards

A RARE jewel shines out amidst all the press release rubbish that crosses Pandora's desk. It comes from the Beard Liberation Front and calls attention to the May Day issue of the organization's weekly newsletter which is very unhappy with the Labour government's treatment of "the bearded" after a year in power. Among the BLF's gripes are: "No legislation to end employment discrimination against people of the grounds of appearance; John Prescott still has not 'come out' and grown a beard; No minister has been given special responsibility for beards; Tony Blair now has less hair than a year ago." Frankly, *Pandora believes that any government* that includes Robin Cook as Foreign Secretary can hardly be accused of discriminating against people because of their physical appearance.

Pandora

DAILY POEM

Exile

By Peter Bland

starts early ... with one's first breath perhaps
or with live-in strangers called Dad and Mum.
Once in the bone though, it goes on.
Good citizens recognize the limp
you carry from place to place
bed to bed. They beg you
to be gone! Your touch
could turn their palaces into tents;
their fortresses into dust. It's said
they sense a lost part of themselves
in your vacant stare and bleeding foot. Across
the moat between you something like love
shines in their eyes as they raise their guns.

Our poems today and tomorrow come from Peter Bland's new volume of *Selected Poems* (Carcanet, £9.95). Born in Scarborough in 1934, Peter Bland spent two decades working in New Zealand, the setting for much of his work.

Champion hits back at drug claim

By Alan Murdoch
in Dublin

TRIPLE Olympic gold medal winner Michelle De Bruin yesterday rejected suggestions from the international swimming body Fina that she tampered with a urine sample when a drugs test was taken in January.

The allegations accuse her of taking advantage of "a banned procedure", using a banned substance, and actions which affected a urine sample.

The swimmer said she was "stunned and horrified" by the Fina communication and warned she would not be bullied by any organisation or media interest making "unfounded slurs and allegations".

The tests indicate the substance involved was a precursor for testosterone. But the swimmer said the test finding did not indicate any testosterone above normal levels had been present. She said: "I am innocent of these charges. I am appalled by the manner in which they have been leaked into the public domain, and I intend fully defending them, if necessary, all the way to the International Sports Court in Switzerland".

De Bruin dismissed suggestions from Fina's Barcelona test laboratory that the sample had "a very strong whiskey odour," saying it would be amusing "were this not the most serious challenge to my career and my credibility".

De Bruin, 28, questioned the motives behind the leak and pointed out that deliberation of test results was supposed to be confidential. That stipulation had been breached by this week's Fina leak to a newspaper, she said.

Splash: Michelle De Bruin takes the bronze medal in the 200m in Atlanta Photograph: David Ashdown

Speaking at a Dublin press conference, she cast doubts on the quality of the testing, highlighting an unexplained discrepancy between the specific gravity of the sample when it was taken in January and that when analysed in Barcelona. Records show it had a gravity reading of 1.015 g/ml in January but only 0.983 in Barcelona. De Bruin's side will also question what temperature the sample was stored at.

The swimmer demanded to know why it took from late January when the sample was analysed in Spain until this week to advise her of any problem.

The sample was taken last January at the De Bruins' home in Co Kilkenny. Last night, Fina qualified its position, sending De Bruin a fax saying her position at this stage was "without tarnish or impingement".

Her solicitor, Peter Lennon, said Fina had yet to say clearly that it was making a doping accusation, and if so what substance was involved. He said De Bruin was "totally dissatisfied" with the test result and described the tampering claim as "preposterous."

The controversy may only be resolved when the second bottle from the same January sample is examined. If the same result is indicated, De Bruin could face a lengthy ban which could effectively end her career.

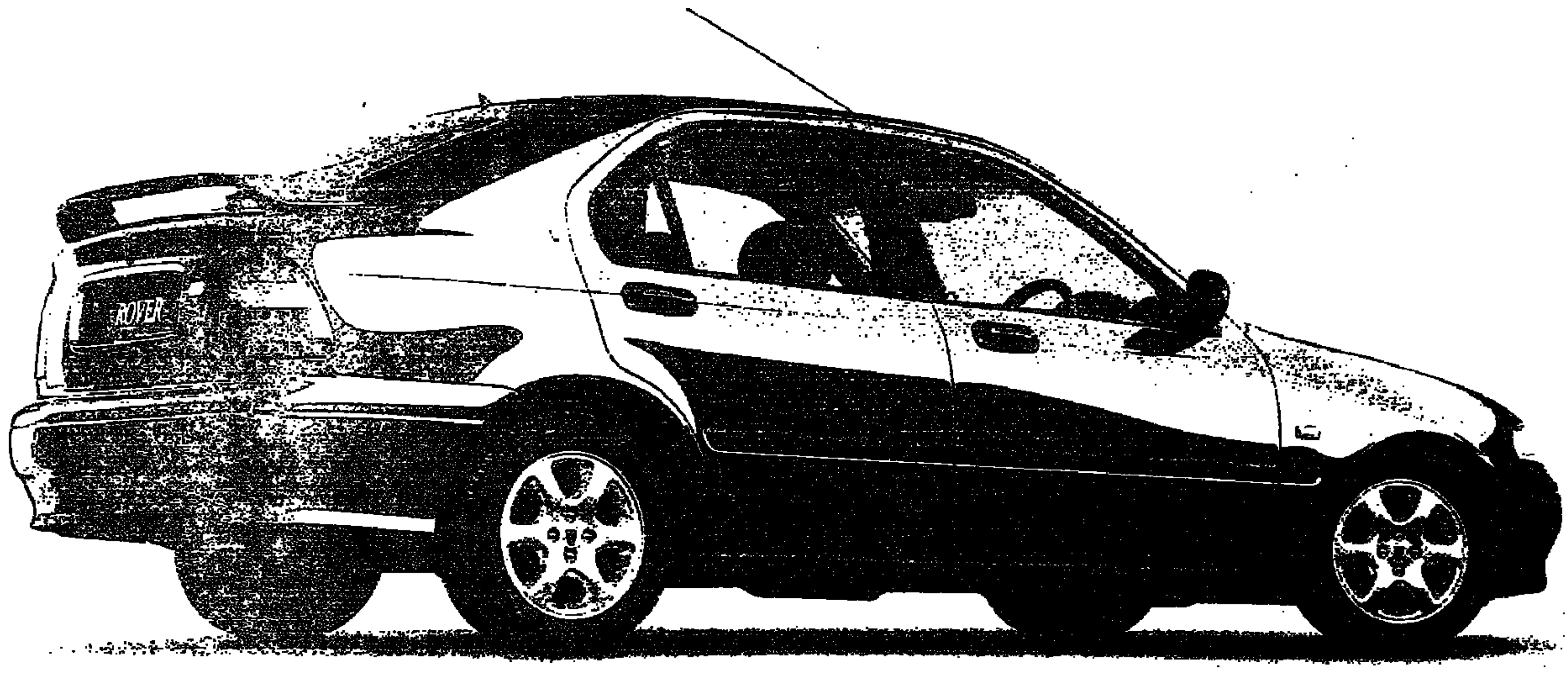
A star that rose too fast to shine

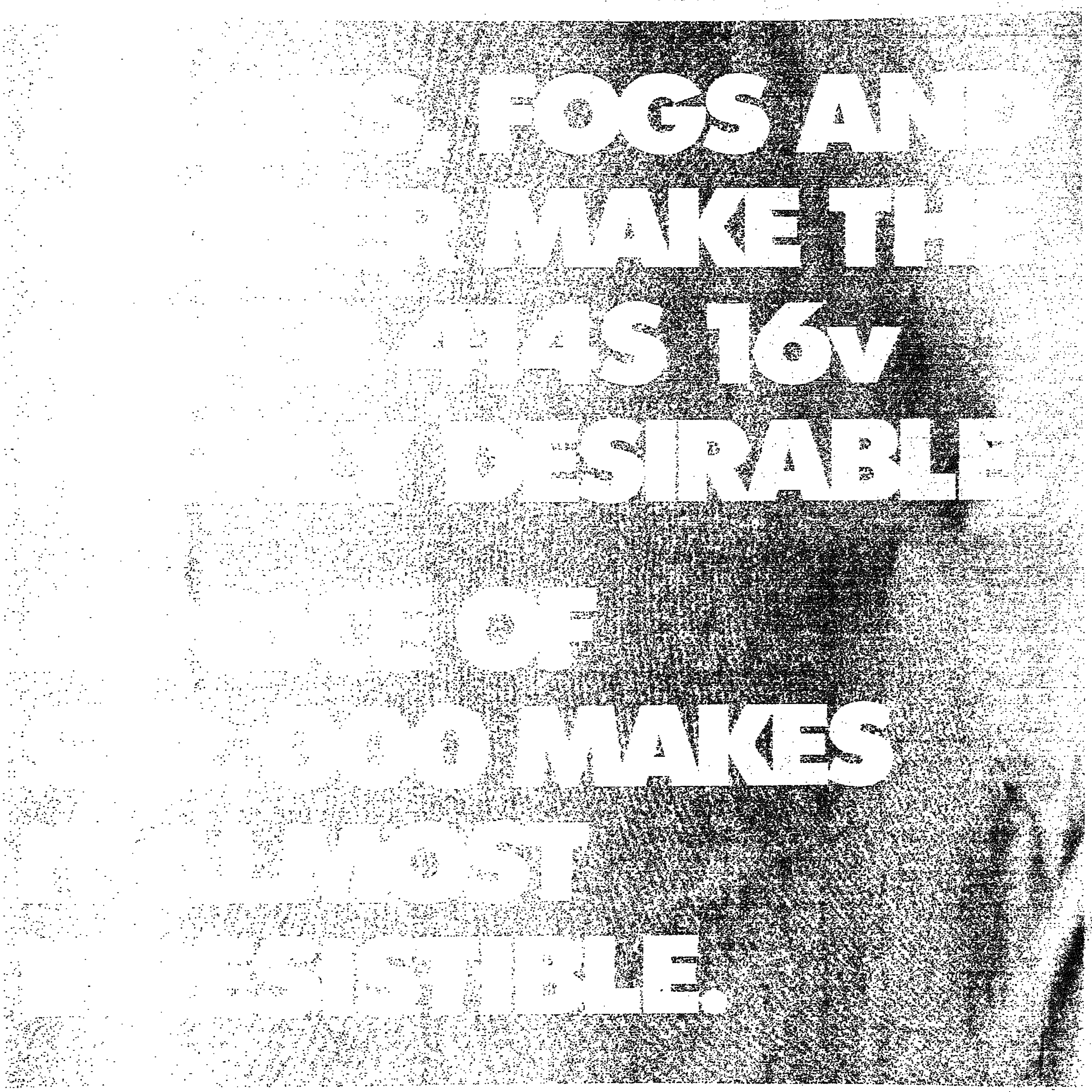
ON THE face of it Michelle De Bruin – who as Michelle Smith Became Ireland's first Olympic swimming champion – is everything an advertiser could dream of. Long ginger hair tumbles over homely features, she is intelligent and she is successful, **writes Guy Hodgson.**

Except hardly any big commercial sponsor has touched her. Not because she is not a winner, but because her wins were too much of a surprise. In an age when drugs are available to improve performance, people like to see their champions coming from a long distance.

De Bruin never travelled down that long path and as a consequence has never been wholly accepted as a bona fide great. Even in her native Ireland, where sporting icons are embraced with touching naivety, she was tainted. Although she won three gold medals and a bronze at the 1996 Olympics, she never received much in the way of public accolade.

The reason stems from guilt by association. Now 28, she was a respectable but unspectacular swimmer until she met Dutch field athlete Erik de Bruin, who was serving a four-year ban after failing a drug test. Romance flourished, he became her coach and her performance rocketed so astonishingly that within four years her 400 metres freestyle time was an astonishing 19 seconds faster.





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Doctors begin trials on drugs to curb suicides

By Jeremy Laurance
Health Editor

NEW DRUGS which are claimed to "cure suicide" are to be tested in the first international trial aimed at preventing people from taking their own lives.

Scientists believe that the anti-psychotic drugs, introduced in the United Kingdom in the last decade for the treatment of schizophrenia, may have a specific biological action on the brain that curbs suicidal ideas. Preliminary studies suggest that they can cut the suicide rate by at least two-thirds.

There are 200,000 people with schizophrenia in Britain, of whom 20,000 – one in ten – are expected to kill themselves, and up to 80,000 will make an attempt. Rob Kerwin, professor of clinical psychopharmacology at the Institute of Psychiatry, in London, said: "That is a lot of people imminently at risk of committing suicide. But suicide rates can now be dramatically reduced by novel anti-psychotics. We think they are very important."

Professor Kerwin, who is co-ordinating the British arm of the trial, said fewer than one in four patients who could benefit from the new drugs was getting them. If all schizophrenic patients were put on them, the Government's public health target of reducing suicides by one-sixth by 2010 could be achieved at a stroke. Ignorance about the drugs, reluctance to switch from the older anti-psychotics, which carry serious side effects including Parkinsonism (shaking hands and stiff gait), and cost all deterred psychiatrists from prescribing them, he said. The newer drugs cost up to £1,800 a year, compared with £50 a year for the older ones.

The trial, which will include 1,000 patients in five countries, will compare two of the new anti-psychotics, clozapine and olanzapine. Patients will be closely monitored and hospitalised or their drugs changed if there is a risk of suicide. "The aim of this trial is to save lives. It is designed to the highest ethical standards. We think it is of such importance to know which is the best drug to prevent suicide."

The researchers hope to prevent any suicides occurring among the trial participants but the drugs will be compared for their effect on suicidal ideas and hospitalisation rates.

Fear of side-effects drove Jonathan Hirst, 19, to refuse drug treatment for his schizophrenia which led directly to his death, his mother said. Ann Hirst described how he had killed himself by falling under a train the day before he was due to have a repeat injection of drugs, which were of the older type.

In a voice breaking with emotion she said: "I am quite convinced it was one of the contributing factors to his death. The last time I saw him he said "Mum, I have my injection tomorrow and I am terrified." He took his life rather than have that injection."

Mrs Hirst, who now works as a volunteer for the National Schizophrenia Fellowship, said suicides among people with schizophrenia were concentrated in young men aged 18 to 24.

"If there was loss of young life on this scale from any other illness there would be an enormous public outcry. However, suicide is still considered to be shameful. Even though it costs me a great deal in personal terms to speak about my son's death, I feel compelled to speak out about these tragedies and appalling loss of life."

Tribute: Roy Castle's widow, Fiona, unveils 'The Last Trumpet', a sculpture by Stephen Broadbent at the Lung Cancer Foundation in Liverpool Photograph: Julian Hamilton

Britain has 'too many' cancer funds

By Jeremy Laurance

THE head of one of Britain's leading cancer research charities said yesterday that there were too many organisations in the field rattling their collecting tins.

Professor Gordon McVie, director-general of the Cancer Research Campaign said there were now 600 cancer charities and the area had become over-subscribed.

"There are far too many charities and the money is getting dissipated. The large numbers are detracting from the main purpose which is to care, cure and treat cancer patients," he said. He urged people who want to set up a charity in memory of someone who has died of cancer to do so within a bigger organisation.

"People don't realise that although it may be a big organisation people can be quite specific about where they want their money to be used," he said.

The call was backed by MPs and cancer organisations across the country who said too much was now spent on PR consultants and fundraisers. Gerald Howarth, Conservative MP for Aldershot, who has an interest in hospices, said: "One does begin to wonder whether there is not an element of duplication and that more money than is necessary is being devoted to administration," he said.

But former health secretary Stephen Dorrell warned that it would be wrong to have a rule of "just five big cancer charities".

He said: "There are some small charities that are less effective, but there are also some small charities that are very effective and do some very important work. The burden of proof is on the bigger charities to show that they can deliver better value than other charities working in the same field."

However, another former Conservative health secretary, Virginia Bottomley, said: "Cancer remains a source of great concern for many people, and I applaud the work being done by the charities to raise funds to promote prevention and to campaign for better treatment. But there is merit in Mr McVie's argument that the effort should be put into research treatment and care and not charities campaigning against each other."

Oxford University defends its position as it slides down league

By Judith Judd
Education Editor

OXFORD University yesterday shrugged off a survey which shows that it is sliding down the universities' premier league.

The survey shows Oxford, one of the world's most famous universities, trailing behind Cambridge and Imperial College, London. Less well-known universities such as York and Warwick, also outstrip Oxford in teaching quality. However, Oxford pointed out that the survey was one of many and all produced only a snapshot rather than a full picture of universities' performance.

"Oxford was, of course, top of the Government's formal research assessment exercise, and in the past we have interchanged with Cambridge and Imperial," the university said in a statement. "Frankly, we are happy to celebrate that Britain today has a handful of first-class universities."

At the time of the Government research assessment exercise, Cambridge disputed Oxford's position at the top of the tables.

The new survey carried out by the *Financial Times* is based on the latest available statistics collected by the Government and other official agencies. It examines performance across 16 categories including the standard required for entry, research, teaching, graduate employment, income from industry and research and spending on libraries. Most weight is given to teaching and research.

Outside Oxbridge and London, the top universities include York, Manchester Institute of Science and Technology, Bath, Bristol and Warwick. Among the former polytechnics, the top five are the Robert Gordon University, Westminster University, Middlesex University, de Montfort University and Oxford Brookes University.

■ More than half university lecturers say they would choose a different career if they were starting afresh, according to a new survey of academic stress published today. Nearly half said that they had seriously considered packing in the job during the last three years and more than half said they felt constantly under strain.

The survey for the Association of University Teachers involved 782 lecturers and was carried out by Gail Kinman from the University of Hertfordshire. More than three-quarters of those questioned said that their job had become more stressful. They blamed increased workloads because of rising student numbers and an explosion in the number of administrative tasks that they were required to do.

While demands on lecturers are increasing, resources in higher education are decreasing, they say.

There are complaints that they are less likely to be consulted about decisions and that "bullying and intimidatory management tactics" from managers have become more common. They also take issue with the effect that procedures for assessing the quality of university courses are having on students. More than 40 per cent believe they damaging students because they divert time and attention away from teaching. Most believe the assessments have harmed the quality of education.

Academic stress, Education+

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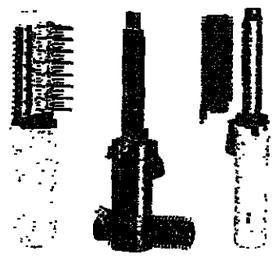

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Forensic scientists 'perverting justice'

By Charles Arthur
Science and Technology Editor

PEOPLE are being wrongly acquitted in criminal cases because incompetent and dishonest "cowboy" forensic scientists are undermining the criminal justice system, says a leading expert in the field.

"Quack practitioners" were infesting the courts because of the unregulated way their services are marketed, according to Zakaria Erzinclioglu, former director of the Forensic Science Research Centre at Durham University. He blames the problem on the previous government's decision to "privatise" the Forensic Science Service (FSS), which examines evidence provided by the police.

As a result of the market created by that decision, "forensic science is totally unregulated and sharks and cowboys abound", he said. In certain sectors "there is nothing to prevent anyone – qualified or not – from advertising themselves as a forensic scientist." Such people "make a very comfortable living indeed".

In an article today in the science journal *Nature*, Dr Erzinclioglu says that unless the system is overhauled miscarriages of justice could occur again. He said there were also "innumerable cases" where "fraudulent practitioners have confused matters in court to such an extent that the jury was unable to evaluate the true significance of the evidence".

Mr Erzinclioglu called for the use of science as a "barrister's tool" to be ended and replaced by a system where forensic scientists were neutral, paid for by the court system: although it would advise police officers and lawyers the body would not depend on the "goodwill" of its customers. This could be implemented by reversing the agency status of the FSS.

Back to health: Kwa Kwa, the youngest hand-reared gorilla at Howletts Animal Park in Canterbury, Kent, takes his first breath of fresh air after recovering from a bout of pneumonia Phil Houghton/Kent News & Pictures

Driver to blame for fatal train accident

By Randeep Ramesh
Transport Correspondent

A RAIL crash in Watford in which one passenger died and more than 70 people were injured, was caused by the driver of the passenger train involved going through a red signal, the official accident report said yesterday.

Although the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) attributed the "primary cause" to the driver, it also attacked Railtrack, the company that owns the nation's track and signalling, for failing to set up proper investigation procedures. This was despite four previous incidents of trains passing signals of danger at the accident spot.

The report said a combination of repositioning a speed restriction sign, better brakes and installing Automatic Train Protection (ATP) – which will brake for a driver who passes a red light – could have prevented last August's accident.

Vic Coleman, deputy chief inspector of railways, admitted ATP was a recommendation of at least "four inquiries" into railway accidents. The industry has long argued it would be too expensive to implement across the network.

But Mr Coleman said a report reassessing the likely cost of adding ATP to the network would be out next month.

"It is likely to drive it (ATP) faster than it has been taken so far," said Mr Coleman.

Railtrack receive much criticism from inspectors – who pointed out a signal which had been incorrectly set up four years ago had not been put right by the company.

The effect was to "confuse" the driver who was left with a far shorter braking distance than he would have expected normally.

Although completed last summer, the report was delayed by the trial of the driver Peter Afford – who was acquitted last month of manslaughter on a charge brought by British Transport Police.

Mr Afford, 57, was at the controls of a London to Milton Keynes evening commuter service when it crashed into an empty train just south of Watford Junction station in Hertfordshire in August 1996.

The report's conclusions angered Lew Adams, general secretary of the train drivers' union Aslef, who attacked the report. "The driver is left to carry the can. Our member was acquitted – now he is tried for a second time and found guilty.

Mr Coleman disagreed. "We looked at every aspect of the evidence. We are quite clear that an error was made, but that does not mean there is a conflict with the trial (judgement). People can make mistakes without being criminally negligent."

Despite the report's conclusions, the HSE said it did not believe there was sufficient evidence of breaches of health and safety legislation to justify legal proceedings against any of the other parties involved.

Des Collins, a solicitor representing some of the families affected by the crash, said there were still "real concerns about railway safety".

Woodhead attacked for usurping role

By Judith Judd
Education Editor

TEACHERS leaders yesterday accused Chris Woodhead, the Chief Inspector of Schools, of usurping the role of David Blunkett, the Secretary of State for Education.

They attacked Mr Woodhead after he gave a lecture accusing teachers of wasting time and money and suggesting that schools were not short of funds.

The speech, which included comments on teacher training and the national curriculum, came as Mr Blunkett is pressing the Chancellor of the Exchequer for more money to raise school standards.

Peter Smith, general secretary of the Association of Teachers and Lecturers, said: "Chris Woodhead is setting himself up as secretary of state, the authority on the curriculum, the authority on school funding – is there nothing that lies outside his scope?

"As long as the chief inspector of schools, whoever he or she is, remains unaccountable, he can do whatever he likes and David Blunkett can do nothing whatever about it. He should ask Tony Blair, as Prime Minister, to clarify Chris Woodhead's position."

In his lecture to the right-wing think-tank Politeia, Mr Woodhead said that while more money was needed to repair crumbling school buildings, a survey by his office had shown that most shortages of books and equipment were the result of bad management. The key to raising standards was not more money but better teaching.

David Hart, general secretary of the National Association of Head Teachers, said in a letter to Mr Woodhead that his intervention had been extremely damaging.

"The Government wants to target substantial additional resources in the direction of schools and yet you – at this crucial moment – choose to allege that, save for crumbling school buildings, we do not really have a resources problem. I find that incomprehensible."

Teachers say Woodhead (top) is undermining Blunkett's position

Nigel de Gruchy, general secretary of the National Association of Schoolmasters/Union of Women Teachers, questioned whether Mr Blunkett and Mr Woodhead could both remain in their current positions.

But Mr Blunkett said that Mr Woodhead had been misinterpreted: "I have no difficulty with what he said. Of course I don't expect him to resign. He is perfectly entitled to his views."

■ In his lecture to Politeia, Mr Woodhead welcomed the establishment of 50 beacon schools to be announced today by Stephen Byers, the school standards minister. The schools, which have all been selected by inspectors for their outstanding performance, will be part of a new scheme to train teachers in schools rather than colleges.

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Rabbi Phillip Greenberg, Chairman of the Divinical Council in Scotland, at a preview of the travelling exhibition of the Dead Sea Scrolls, which are on show at the Kelvingrove Museum, Glasgow, for the next four months Photograph: David Cheskin/PA

Tory stance allowed BSE into foodchain

By Charles Arthur
Science and Technology Editor

THE Thatcher administration's passion for deregulation caused concern among government scientists that lack of controls in meat rendering could lead to new animal diseases, the BSE inquiry heard yesterday.

Scientists now believe that lack of proper "cooking" of animal remains by rendering companies let the BSE disease agent from infected cows slip into animal feed – thus infecting even more cattle.

But evidence presented to the BSE inquiry in London yesterday showed that adequate regulations to stop this could have been put in place in 1975-76, but were thwarted by lobbying from rendering companies.

The rendering companies, meanwhile, insist that the rise of BSE was not their fault, because they used the same practices at the same times as other countries. Yet the disease, which has infected about a million cattle and led to the deaths of at least 24 Britons, has apparently been limited to the UK.

But there were concerns about rendering companies' practices even in the Seventies, it emerged yesterday. In a letter written in June 1980, the inquiry heard, Keith Meldrum, now the chief veterinary officer, wrote a letter expressing regret that the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (Maff) had "missed our opportunity" in 1975 and 1976 to bring in regulations that could have prevented dangerous animal diseases from being spread via rendering plants. "Our original proposals ... it would appear, would have been acceptable to our political masters at that time," he wrote.

But, he continued, "I am afraid I remain unconvinced that we have, at present, sufficient powers to control the risk of notifiable disease outbreaks due to the recycling of certain types of animal materials."

Though BSE had not been identified at that time, it is exactly the sort of disease that would be covered by such regulations.

Though Maff civil servants were pushing for more powers to insist that the plants should treat animal remains at higher temperatures and for longer periods, to destroy any disease agents, the Thatcher approach, to "remove red tape", meant that the task of ensuring compliance was left instead to rendering companies when legislation was passed in 1981.

Yesterday principals from the rendering industry denied suggestions that flawed cooking in plants had allowed the BSE agent, reckoned to be a misshapen protein, to survive. But they admitted that export regulations fell far below the standards normally required for effective treatment of waste, stipulating too low a temperature. They also admitted that operators might have ended the "cooking" process prematurely as the end of a shift approached, perhaps cutting an hour off a five-hour process.

MPs call for antibiotics ban

By Fran Abrams
Political Correspondent

ANTIBIOTICS used to boost growth in farm animals should be banned, a committee of MPs said yesterday.

In a comprehensive report on food safety, the Commons agriculture committee said evidence that antibiotic-resistant micro-organisms were transferring to humans was "approaching conclusiveness". It followed a more cautious report by a Lords committee earlier this month.

Animals were fed the drugs routinely to prevent illness, the report said. They were also given them as feed additives and as growth promoters as well as to cure ailments, it added. The committee called for tighter restrictions on their use for "subtherapeutic" or preventive purposes as well as a ban on use as growth promoter. "Every effort should be made to develop vaccines as alternatives to antibiotics for therapeutic purposes," the report said.

Medical antibiotics given to humans can become useless in combating disease because of resistance to the drugs built up in this way. There have been claims, however, that lax use of the drugs in humans has also led to resistance.

The MPs added that despite high hopes for the new Food Standards Agency, any over-optimistic expectations that it would achieve immediate success were bound to be squashed. "Food safety crises will still occur," the report said. The agency should set up an emergency unit to develop contingency plans for such incidents and work with local authorities and the food industry, it added.

The MPs also highlighted discrepancies between numbers of food-poisoning outbreaks in different parts of the country, and said not enough had been done to find out why.

The National Office of Animal Health said it was "astonished" by the committee's comments on antibiotic use. Roger Cook, its director, said bacterial resistance had not been in the committee's original terms of reference. "We are particularly concerned that an agricultural committee ... appears to have taken no account of their serious implications for animal welfare, the environment or the competitiveness of UK farming," he said.

However, the calls for a ban won strong support from the British Medical Association, which said multi-drug resistant salmonella had multiplied tenfold in the last six years, probably because of intensive farming methods including antibiotics in cattle feed.

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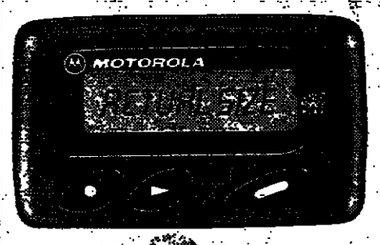

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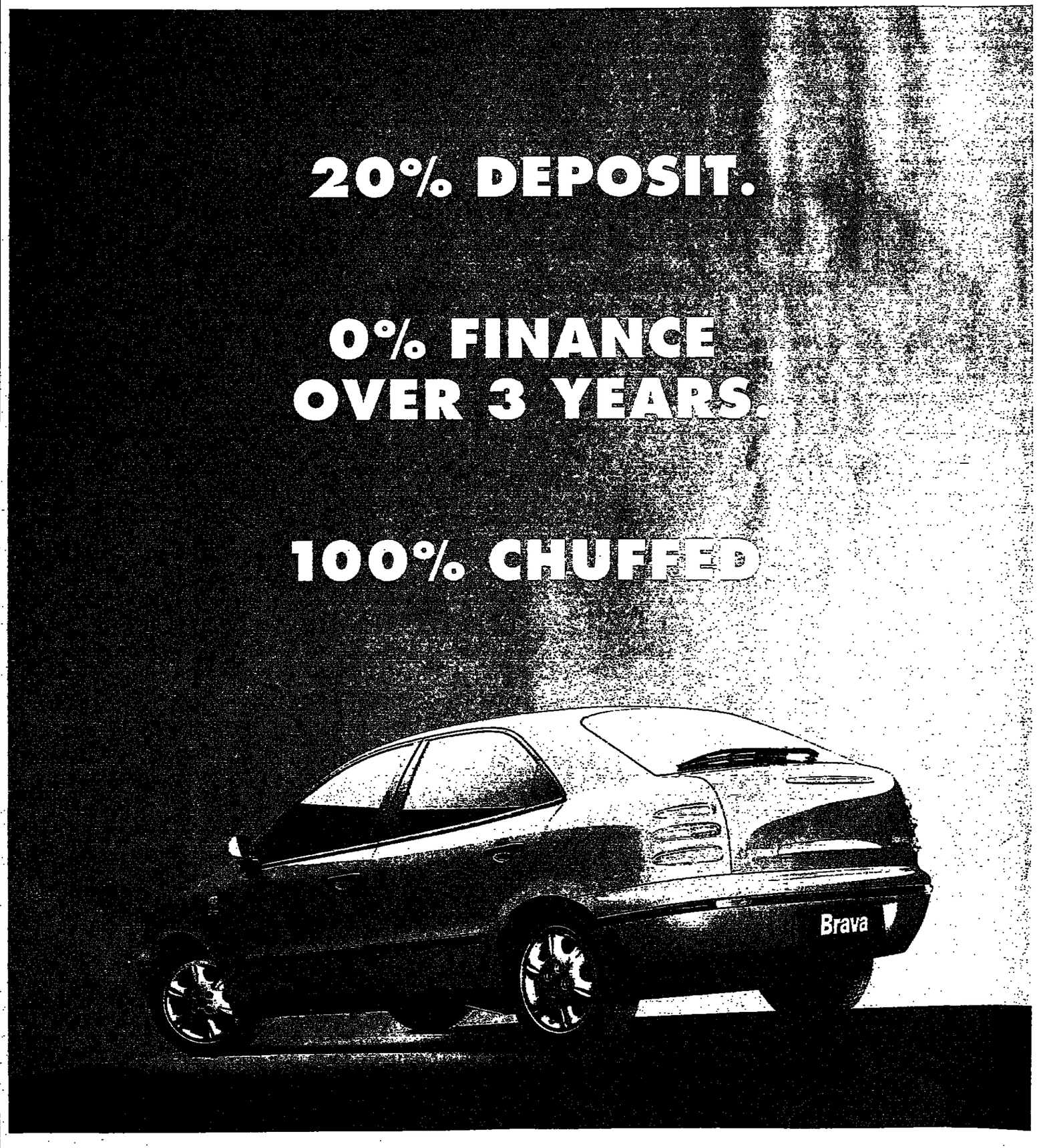

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Cook's code on arms sales faces unfriendly fire

By Fran Abrams
Political Correspondent

ROBIN Cook's new European Code of Conduct on arms sales is being watered down under pressure from other arms-dealing countries, a group of leading charities claimed yesterday.

A leaked draft of the ethical code, discussed in Brussels yesterday, contained no reference to the public accountability which was promised in an earlier version, they said.

The organisations, including Oxfam, Christian Aid and Amnesty International, said the new rules should force all European countries to expose their arms sales to Parliamentary scrutiny. Under the latest version they would have to tell each other about them but not the public.

A "loophole" which allowed the export of weapons to repressive regimes if they were for the use of their security forces has been tightened up, the group said. However, the new draft says such sales will still be permissible if the arms are to be used to combat criminal violence. Most security forces would argue that this was the case, they added.

Also, the economic, commercial and industrial interests of member countries could over-ride some of the accepted criteria on ethical arms dealing. Although human rights and the need to combat international aggression were paramount, the impact of the arms sales on development could be ignored.

France has been the protagonist in attempting to water down the code, the group suggested. After Britain, France has the second largest arms manufacturing sector in Europe.

The sticking point between the two countries remains the level of consultation that must take place before one nation accepts an arms contract that has been turned down on ethical grounds by another. Britain wants all European countries to be allowed to comment, while it appears France just wants the information to be passed to the other country concerned.

The European member states have also failed to agree a common list of equipment to which the code will apply. If they cannot do so then existing international lists will be used instead, but these do not include much of the military, security and police equipment which the charities say can be used to abuse human rights.

If agreement is not reached in meetings between officials, such as the one which took place yesterday, the matter will be passed to ministers via the EU's General Affairs Council.

The five charities also includes Saferworld and the World Development Movement. Last night Paul Eavis, director of Saferworld, said the code was at a crucial stage and should not be watered down.

"It is a vital initiative and tougher export guidelines, more rigorous consultation procedures and increased transparency are still needed if it is to help stem the flow of arms from Europe to the developing world," he said.

A group of campaigners against the arms trade infiltrated the annual general meeting of British Aerospace yesterday, protesting about weapon sales to countries such as Indonesia and Turkey where governments have been accused of repression.

Logging on: Tony Blair takes questions from cyberspace at Downing Street with the help of Sir David Frost — Photograph: PA

Tony's caught in the net by quest for cup final tickets

By Colin Brown
Chief Political Correspondent

TONY BLAIR yesterday went surfing on the Internet for the first time and was nearly tripped up by his first question from cyberspace. The Prime Minister was asked by a fellow Newcastle United fan: "I don't suppose you have a spare ticket for the cup final?"

Mr Blair seemed unsure: "Actually, I probably do because the one that I was going to have I can't use," he said. He has a G8 conference that day, but Jason Smith, the "netty" from Newcastle, will not be getting Mr Blair's VIP ticket.

Jason said he was "desperate" for a ticket, but Mr Blair said: "Well I don't know whether I can do anything about that, but I am not going to be going unfortunately."

Mr Blair recently claimed that he knew so little about the Internet that he thought it was something to do with Italian football. But he went surfing with Sir David Frost, who checked on the questions before they were put to the Prime Minister. He was asked about the issues casting a cloud over the Prime Minister as he celebrates the first year in office – rising interest rates, higher mortgages, and Ken Livingstone.

Julian Hood, of Leyton, asked Mr Blair whether he would like to see Mr Livingstone as the Mayor of London. If Mr Livingstone was hacking into the official Government website, the message was clearly 'don't e-mail us, we'll e-mail you . . .'

Mr Blair replied: "We haven't got the referendum through yet." The anoraks in cyberspace also questioned the Prime Minister on whether he supported legalising cannabis – no; banning cigarettes – no; and lowering the age of consent for lesbians and gays to 16 – yes.

Another political 'anorak', William Hague, also went surfing from a computer terminal at Conservative Central Office for 30 minutes, answering questions on Europe, taxation, and his experiences since becoming leader from members of the public.

Commons offers MPs hi-tech voting

By Anthony Bevins
Political Editor

A COMMONS voting system that combines infra-red cordless handsets, smart cards and fingerprints was offered to ministers and MPs yesterday as an alternative to the traditional method of "dividing" the House.

The Commons modernisation committee reported that although the present system of voting, under which MPs are physically counted through the lobbies by clerks, was simple, straightforward, generally highly accurate, fraud-proof, and would require no extra cost, it was time-consuming, abstentions were not recorded, and there was no chance of correcting a mistaken vote.

The all-party committee suggested means of recording abstentions, and more convenient voting times, but the balance of the report was clearly tilted towards electronic systems – "smarts cards and non-contact-readers; fingerprint readers, touch screens; infra-red handsets and remote detectors".

It was even suggested that electronic voting could enable MPs to vote without leaving home, although that was quickly ruled out. "We believe that the House would not wish to make such a radical departure from existing practice, so in all the options we put forward for consideration it is envisaged that voting will take place either in the existing divisions lobbies or in the immediate vicinity of the Chamber," the report said.

While the very notion of electronic voting – and costs of up to £400,000 – will outrage traditionalists, it is possible that there are now enough new MPs in the House to swing a change. But the complications of the new procedures could be daunting to those who are incapable of working a video recorder.

One of the systems offered uses an infra-red cordless handsets: "Members would collect a handset from a rack at the entrance to the Chamber; insert into the handset a unique smart card bearing a record of their fingerprint characteristics; confirm their identity by pressing one of their recorded fingers on the fingerprint reader incorporated in the handset; point the handset at one of the remote detectors ... and vote 'Aye' or 'No', or 'abstain' by pressing the appropriate button on the handset."

Ministers and MPs have until 20 May to fill in a response form on the proposals; recommendations for change could be put to the House later this year.

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Getting the measure of the mountain

STEPHEN GOODWIN

Everest Diary

THE prolonged roar of an avalanche woke me in the middle of last night. Normally the rumble of falling rocks or ice doesn't disturb me, it is so much a part of the Base Camp background.

But this was a big one, probably off the extended west ridge of Everest, snow and rock spewing down for hundreds of metres.

So continuous is the movement of the Himalayas that even if any of our team stand on the summit in a couple of weeks time, they will not be able to swear precisely how high they are above sea level or where they are in relation to the Tibetan plateau to the north.

Personally, I would settle for 8,848m high or 29,028ft for old imperialists or Americans. But the question of exactly how high Everest is continues to excite some minds and it seems easy to raise funds for survey after survey, despite the unlikelihood of discovering anything new.

This spring is no exception. Wally Berg, a 43-year-old American, is here again leading a small climber-scientist team pursuing, by proxy, the obsession of an 88-year-old cartographer, Bradford Washburn, in Everest's growth and precise position. Washburn directed the Boston Museum of Science from 1939 to 1980 and is revered for his mapping of Mt McKinley, the highest peak in North America, and a map of Everest regarded almost as a work of art.

Berg, a mountain guide, got involved with Washburn about two years ago and regards the old man as his mentor. He traces an early link with the Everest pioneers. Washburn listening "spellbound" in 1926 to Capt John Noel recounting the 1924 expedition on which Mallory and Irvine disappeared, leaving a question mark over whether they might have reached the summit.

"I consider this a mountaineering trip steeped in tradition. Brad Washburn through most of this century has maintained the spirit of mountaineering coupled with science," Berg told me in his spacey dome tent surrounded by the hi-tech survey equipment. Berg and his team, including Briton Charles Corfield, hope to power drill a surveyor's bolt station into the bedrock of Everest as near to the summit as possible. One of the problems for would-be surveyors has been that the summit itself is deep under snow and ice. In 1992 a team bored down more than 90 inches without striking rock.

If the climbing goes well, the team will fix a Trimble

> "I consider this a mountaineering trip steeped in tradition"

4800 Global Position System (GPS) receiver on the bolt to determine the altitude and radar to measure how much ice and snow there is on the summit. Simultaneously GPS receivers will be operated on Everest's South Col and elsewhere in the Khumbu region.

"Until we can get a profile of what the rock under the snow and ice on the summit looks like, the question will remain as to how high is Everest," Berg said. However, admitting the lack of interest in the scientific community in the whole exercise, he doesn't expect to discover any "earth shattering" difference from the accepted 8,848m.

"The real scientists couldn't give a flip about mounting this station on Everest. But the mountaineering community, active and armchair, are fascinated to know all we can about the mountain and that is what this expedition is a part of."

However Berg does have another intriguing Washburn obsession to pursue. Last year the old man received new photographs of what had previously appeared to be an oxygen bottle embedded in the ice about 20 feet down on the Tibetan north. Washburn thought the bottle's date stamp would indicate the build-up of summit ice, however Berg doubted it could be retrieved. Someone would have to abseil from the summit, hack out the bottle and then climb back up – a formidable exercise at such altitude.

In fact the new photographs indicated the object was not an oxygen cylinder but the remains of a metal tripod placed by the Chinese in an extraordinary military-style ascent in 1975.

"Brad really wants that tripod. I won't say whether it is going to happen this year. I think it's physically risky. But it's on our lengthy list of things to do. If there's a visible way of retrieving this thing we will do it. We will certainly try to get an accurate measure of how far down it is and get a better picture."

For myself, our Himalayan Kingdoms team is turning away from Everest for a few days and heading down the Khumbu to the village of Dingboche. The object is to eat heartily and breathe deeply of the oxygen-rich air before returning to Base Camp in about five days ready to go for the summit – whatever its scientifically-determined height.

High and mighty: Continental drift makes the Himalayas grow at the rate of 1mm a year Stephen Goodwin

'Daughters at work' day raises legal problems

By Barrie Clement
Labour Editor

FEMINISTS who today expect thousands of parents to participate in "Take Your Daughter To Work Day" may be flouting the law, according to a senior female solicitor.

By ignoring the increasingly benighted and put-upon population of boys the charity behind the nationwide exercise could be guilty of unlawful positive discrimination.

Equal opportunities is perfectly legal and so is "positive action" – ensuring that there are female applicants for jobs – but positive discrimination against either gender is open to legal action.

Blue chip companies like BT, Shell International, Glaxo Wellcome and NatWest are all proponents of the "Our Daughters" charity and could all therefore be held to account.

Ann-Marie Thompson, an expert in employment law at Eversheds, said that she is increasingly dealing with cases where men have suffered from sex discrimination at work.

While welcoming "Take Your Daughters To Work Day", Ms Thompson warned that employers should set aside positive discrimination in favour of equal opportunity.

The lawyer warns businesses that positive discrimination could result in large claims against them by men.

"It is vital that we continue to create opportunities and support for women as it is true they remain under-represented in certain industrial sectors. Work experience such as "Take Your Daughters To Work Day" often place a significant role in obtaining employment in the future and so should be tackled correctly. Companies should ensure that they provide the same opportunities for both sexes and recognise candidates on their own merits."

She said that an increasing number of men had been successful in winning compensation for discrimination and that the amounts received in such cases have increased by around 60 per cent over the last couple of years. She said that although cases of sex discrimination against women were well known and much publicised, those against men were occurring more frequently.

The idea of introducing girls to the work environment first emerged in the United States, and the exercise is now in its fifth year in Britain.

Ursula Monaghan, project officer for the "Our Daughters" charity, said that the organisation realised that because of boys' under-achievement at school, they had needs as well.

However, she pointed out that high educational achievement by young women was not always translated into success at work. For example while 80 per cent of teachers were women, they were severely under-represented among heads and deputy heads. The number of women in top jobs in most professions was disproportionately low, she said.

The object of the exercise was to ensure that girls were thinking about their future careers when choosing subjects to study at school. The initiative was particularly important in areas where women were under represented. She argued that a change to "take your children to work" would blunt the edge of the campaign, but suggested that perhaps another day should be chosen for boys.

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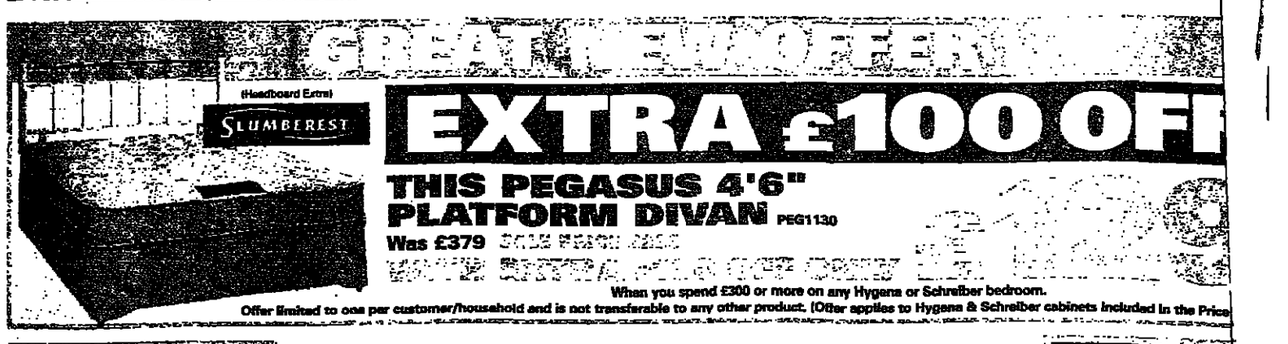

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50th birthday party keeps Israel squabbling

National honour: A girl looking out through balloons displaying Israel's 50th anniversary logo yesterday as Jerusalem observed the day of remembrance for those killed fighting for the Jewish state Photograph: Andre Durand/AFP

While ordinary citizens forget strife and uncertainty, extravaganzas are targets of wrath, reports **Eric Silver** in Jerusalem

THE OFFICIAL slogan for Israel's 50th birthday bash, which opened at sunset last night with banners and beacons, fireworks, drums and barbecues, is: "Together in love, together in hope." The unofficial slogan is: "Despite everything ..."

The liberal daily newspaper *Ha'aretz* ran a jubilee feature yesterday under the heading, "50 reasons to live in Israel (despite everything)". And despite everything – the internal divisions, the external uncertainties, security alerts and rising unemployment – ordinary, jaded Israelis are celebrating.

Unprompted, blue-and-white Star of David flags sprouted on car antennae immediately after the Passover holiday. Even though yesterday was a day of mourning for the fallen of Israel's wars, central Jerusalem was bustling with last-minute shoppers and born-again tourists.

Abraham Rosenthal, director-general of the Israel Hotels Association, said that occupancy in Jerusalem hotels was as high as 85 per cent after one of the worst years in the industry's history. In the first quarter of 1998, bookings for rooms were down 20 per cent on the already depressed figures for 1997.

Yet the official celebrations, dogged by resignations, mismanagement and charges of political bias, have remained fraught to the last. At a memorial meeting at Tel-Aviv University, families of students killed in war walked out when the left-wing author Yizhar Smilansky said that Israel would have been at peace and no more soldiers would have died had Yitzhak Rabin not been assassinated.

In the neighbouring town of Holon, other families jeered the ultra-Orthodox deputy housing minister, Rabbi Meir Porush, when he represented the government at a ceremony at the military cemetery. They complained that the young men from his community avoided military service – and that most ultra-Orthodox Jews ignored the two minutes' silence honoured on remembrance day.

The organisers of a Hollywood-style jubilee extravaganza, scheduled for tonight in the Hebrew University sports stadium, were striving yesterday to save it from the sectarian strife that everyone was trying to forget.

This began when the religious parties demanded the cancellation of a performance by the Batsheva modern ballet troupe in which the dancers strip down to their underwear and smirk during a rendition of a Hebrew hymn. The religious also urged Tuvia Tzafrir, a popular comedian, to drop a skit on a leading political rabbi, and suggested a prayer for the safety of Israel be inserted in its place.

Religious MPs accused the dancers of "contempt for the sensibilities of the religious public". The religious parties in the Jerusalem city council, many of whose voters boycott Independence Day as a secular intrusion in the Jewish calendar, added: "The insult is not only to the religious sector, but to the dignity of the Jewish nation". The Batsheva is one of Israel's flagship dance companies and the offending item was the opening number for a 50th anniversary gala in Washington last month. The company refused to change it.

Deputy housing minister Mr Porush announced that the Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, had promised to meet their demands – a claim that was promptly denied by the Prime Minister's spokesman, who added that the good rabbi had threatened to bring down the Government. The Israel Artists' Union responded by threatening a mass walkout.

"We cannot let censorship in through the back door," the chairman of the union, Shaikeh Levy, protested. "If the artists of Israel have any pride, they have to say: "This will not be".

The director of the jubilee festivities, Doron Shmueli, himself a contentious political appointee, defended the performers' rights, but promised to "do my utmost to calm things down and prevent all parties from being offended". Mr Netanyahu is still trying to find a compromise.

A festival spokeswoman said last night: "As of now, the show goes on."

Kim sends out public message urging unity of the Koreas

By Richard Lloyd Parry

Kim Jong Il: Promoting dialogue and solidarity

THE North Korean leader Kim Jong Il, has published a long tract calling for dialogue with South Korea, leading to eventual unification of the divided peninsula. In a further sign of his country's new willingness to engage the outside world, he said: "Let us reunify the country independently and peacefully through the great unity of the entire nation."

The open letter, released yesterday by the state-run Korean Central News Agency, continued: "All the Koreans in the North, South and abroad must visit one another, hold contacts, promote dialogue and strengthen solidarity."

The lengthy essay is in the form of a letter to delegates at a North Korean symposium and it contains no new proposals. But the fact that it is in the name of Mr Kim, the son and chosen heir of the country's late founder Kim Il Sung, suggests Pyongyang's desire to keep alive contacts with Seoul after a failed round of talks.

Kim Junior makes few public appearances and, although numerous turgid tracts have been published in his name over the years, this is the first since his election as general secretary of the Workers' Party last October. Relations between North and South went through a very bad patch after Seoul failed to express condolences on the death of Kim Il Sung in 1994. But in the last three months, after four years of recrimination, sabre rattling and tense border incidents, they have taken a gentle turn for the better.

As a former dissident and political prisoner, South Korea's new President, Kim Dae Jung, is an easier man for Pyongyang to deal with than his loathed predecessor, Kim Young Sam. But more importantly, the North is desperate, locked in a chronic food shortage which is reported to have left as many as three million people dead.

The two sides met in Peking earlier this month for their first one-to-one meeting in four years, but the talks failed after the South insisted that Pyongyang take steps to reunite families divided by the political rift, as a precondition to providing aid in the form of fertiliser.

Mr Kim's latest statement suggests that the two will meet again. "The April North-South joint conference clearly showed that the Communists, nationalists and various other political forces and different sections of the population would be fully able to unite in the struggle for the common cause of the nation," he wrote, "regardless of the difference in ideology, ideals, political views and religious beliefs."

هكذا من الأهل

France's Mr Honest denies kick-backs

By John Lichfield
in Paris

THE former French foreign minister Roland Dumas, now chief watchdog of honesty in French public life, was placed under formal examination for corruption yesterday.

Mr Dumas, 75, one of the most celebrated lawyers in France, whose clients have included Pablo Picasso and François Mitterrand, is suspected of taking kick-backs – including a £1,100 pair of shoes – while he was foreign minister from 1988-93.

He was placed under judicial investigation yesterday – one step short of a formal charge – for "receipt or aiding and abetting the receipt of embezzled company funds". Mr Dumas is the fifth most senior political figure in France. He is president of the constitutional council, the body which, amongst other things, judges the honesty of French elections and politicians.

> Mr Dumas says he didn't receive so much as a shoelace from the frigate sale

The case creates a possible constitutional crisis: can Dumas remain in this post while under examination for dishonesty himself? On the other hand, if he is forced to resign, does not that undermine his right to be presumed innocent? French politicians were sharply divided on the issue yesterday; President Jacques Chirac has previously said that the Socialist Mr Dumas must stay in office; Mr Chirac's own party, the neo-gaullist RPR insisted yesterday that he must go.

Mr Dumas, who is convalescing after a hip operation, is refusing to co-operate with the two judges handling the case. They travelled, amid much media fanfare, to his country home near Bordeaux yesterday to place him under formal examination. He claims that, as a former cabinet minister, his case must go directly to a higher authority, the Court of Justice of the Republic.

The expensive life-style of Mr Dumas, and that of his long-time mistress, have long been the subject of speculation. In November last year his mistress, Christine Deviers-Joncour, 51, was placed in custody. She has since admitted to the two investigating judges that she took "commissions" of at least £6m to influence his ministerial decisions on arms sales, especially a controversial sale of six frigates to Taiwan in 1991-2.

The commissions were paid by the oil firm Elf, the largest company in France, which acted as a deal-maker and fixer for the French arms maker, Thomson, in the sale of the frigates. Mr. Dumas originally vehemently opposed the sale on the grounds that it would disrupt political and commercial relations with China. Later, the then Socialist government changed its mind (but not before Mr Dumas squared the Chinese authorities on a visit to Peking).

Mr Dumas denies receiving so much as a shoe-lace from the frigate sale. He admits that his £1,100 shoes were bought for him on a charge card which was given to his mistress by Elf. He claims that she temporarily settled the account for him and that he repaid her later.

Several witnesses have told the investigating judges, however, that it was Mr Dumas who arranged for Elf to take on his mistress as a "public relations consultant" in the first place. Her only duty appears to have been to lobby her lover.

For this, and attending two meetings, £6m was deposited by Elf in her Swiss bank account.

According to press leaks, the investigators have established circumstantial links between withdrawals from her Swiss account and the roughly £1m in cash paid into a Dumas bank account in Paris during this period.

Foul play: Domenico Gramazio (top centre) is restrained as the football debate turns violent Photograph: EPA

Fists fly as Italy's MPs succumb to a bout of football fever

By Anne Hanley
in Rome

FOOTBALL violence was high on the agenda in the Italian Lower House yesterday – but not as a topic for debate.

Ushers struggled to restrain furious MPs as insults and fists flew during a short but passionate exchange about decisions by first division referees.

Italy's emotional relationship with soccer is legendary, and feelings have been running higher than usual since the referee in last Sunday's league match between Juventus and Internazionale made much-disputed penalty decisions which helped Juventus to a 1-0 victory and an unbeatable first division lead.

It was this match, and possible changes to the refereeing system, which were being discussed in the House yesterday, but the session was short-lived.

"Comparing it with the stands would be an insult to football fans," said an indignant deputy prime minister Walter Veltroni (Juventus) after Domenico Gramazio of the right-wing National Alliance (Roma) and Massimo Mauro of the Democratic Left (a former Juventus player) lunged at each other across the House.

"Every referee in this country drives a Fiat," screamed Gramazio, a BMW owner, accusing match officials of accepting favours from the Agnelli group which owns both Fiat and Juventus of Turin. "Foul, who the **** do you think you are?" shouted Mauro, a Juventus player from 1985-9.

In a country where few areas of public life have escaped accusations of corruption and foul play, the football world stands out for its relatively clean slate. Even in the case of last Sunday's game, few critics have gone as far as suggesting match-rigging.

But supporters nerves have been stretched. And while Italian fans have kept violence in the stands to a minimum, Italian MPs have yet to reach such heights of maturity.

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Bonn takes a tougher line on Euro-bank

By Imre Karacs
in Bonn

FACED BY a Bundesbank revolt, the German government hardened its stance yesterday towards France in the row over who should be in charge of Europe's common currency.

After a meeting of the cabinet in Bonn, officials let it be known that the compromise intended to placate the French government was no longer on the table.

At this weekend's European summit in Brussels, Chancellor Helmut Kohl will be pushing for a snap decision in favour of his man.

The Germans had never made secret of the fact that Wim Duisenberg, former head of the Dutch Central Bank, was their candidate to take over the European Central Bank. The ECB, to be based in Frankfurt, will be born on 1 July. Its task will be to oversee the introduction of the euro.

France, however, feels it has sacrificed too much on the altar of monetary union without gaining any recognition as a great power.

Last year, the French government threw the hat of Jean-Calude Trichet, its chief central banker, into the ring, and now finds it impossible to withdraw the application no one in Europe had sought.

The impasse was to have been resolved by a clever compromise, allowing Mr Trichet to supplant Mr Duisenberg midway through his eight-year term. But this job-share arrangement, mediated with the help of the British presidency, has fallen victim to hardliners in Bonn and Frankfurt.

A telephone call from Tony Blair to Chancellor Kohl on Tuesday proved fruitless. Yesterday, the German cabinet nominated Otmar Issing, the hardline chief economist of the Bundesbank, to the six-member board of the European Central Bank, and also served notice that Mr Kohl would push for a final decision on the composition of the ECB's top flight this Saturday.

Bonn's sudden urgency – a decision does not have to be taken until July – echoes mounting concern in Frankfurt. Hans Tietmeyer, the President of the Bundesbank, has written to Chancellor Kohl expressing his opposition to the job-share plan, and is expected to receive full backing from the Bundesbank's governing council when it meets today.

Frankfurt is threatening to withdraw its support for the euro if the wrong choice were made, thus triggering currency turmoil and a political crisis all over Europe.

Bonn has heeded the warning. The question now is whether the French government has the nerve to call the Bundesbank's bluff.

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Spain counts cost of a poisoned flood

By Elizabeth Nash
in Huevar, near Seville

Wall of death: The ruptured dam, through which a flood of toxic waste escaped, killing everything in its path and threatening the Doñana nature reserve
Photograph: Reuters

YOU CAN walk to the Guadiamar river from the hamlet of Huevar, through olive groves, along pathways lined with michaelmas daisies and meadow sweet and poppies whose scarlet heads dance in the breeze. Then the alluvial soil, so fertile for the smallholders' crops of sunflowers, wheat and cotton, disappears beneath a rubbery blanket of lead-grey sludge tinged with green, thickening like asphalt.

Jose Maria Bustillo has been working his five-hectare plot for 30 years. Four hectares are coated with toxic mud that burst from a mine reservoir and cascaded down the Guadiamar valley at the weekend, threatening Spain's most important nature reserve downstream. "I'm ruined," he says.

He doubted he could sell the small portion of the sunflower crop that remained above the deadly tide, because of fears that heavy metals and chemical pollutants in the mining waste will contaminate everything around. "I can't even irrigate what remains, because the well on my plot is polluted."

The regional farmers' association in Seville, Asaja, says 6,000 hectares of farmland have been inundated, causing losses of 1.8bn pesetas (£7.2m). Paco Castro, a biologist from Huevar, says all the sludge must be dug up and carted off. But even if this is done - and Mr Bustillo doubts the authorities will go to such lengths - the cocktail of zinc, mercury, copper, acidic compounds and other metals will already have seeped into underground aquifers and poisoned everything. "This fine soil is like a sponge, it soaks up everything," Mr Castro says, stumping behind Mr Bustillo. "And everything that was alive is now dead." He picked up the husk of a river crab, corroded to a crisp by the fierce concentration of acid. Mud-coated fish and eels, stinking, lay stranded by the receding flood. Fresh, star-spiked tracks of a stork criss-cross the murky banks. "It's easy food for them, dead fish," said Mr Castro.

The Andalucian regional government fought hard to increase its autonomous powers, Mr Castro says, "but now this has happened they don't want to know." The regional authorities are suing the Swedish mining company Boliden Apirsa, owners of the toxic-waste reservoir upstream at Aznalcollor.

But the company says it met all the regulations imposed by the regional authorities. Boliden's chairman, Anders Bulow, said yesterday he would take responsibility for the accident should the courts decide against him. "But until the causes have been established, it's too soon to assign blame."

Mineworkers have warned for years that the toxic-deposit lakes that clutter this rich mining area were shoddily built and poorly monitored. "These deposits are a time-bomb waiting to explode," says Nicolas Ramirez, a former miner from nearby Rio Tinto, forced to retire eight years ago.

The European Commission has asked the government in Madrid and the Andalucian authorities for information on what caused the reservoir wall to crack, sending effluent cascading more than 60km to the sea. Dyke-building diverted the flow away from the heart of the UN-protected Doñana nature reserve. But park scientists fear poison elements will seep through anyway and blight the wetlands for decades. Mr Bustillo is still in shock. "When I came to work on Saturday and found everything soaked with this black stuff, I knew something terrible had happened. And I guessed what it was."

Move to halt executions

NIGERIAN rights groups pleaded with the country's generals to spare the lives of six men sentenced to death for plotting to overthrow the military ruler, Sani Abacha. The ruling Military Council must ratify the sentences on General Abacha's former deputy, Oladipo Diya, and the other five before they can be carried out.
— *Reuters, Lagos*

Sudan aid

IN AN attempt to overcome the restriction on air drops of supplies in southern Sudan, World Vision aid agency has trucked in food. It has transported 878 tonnes, mostly from Uganda, for feeding stations in the worst-affected areas in Tonj and Gogrial, the first significant movement of food aid by road into Sudan since 1989.

Flogging plea

JAMAICA'S Court of Appeal is to hear arguments on whether judges should sentence convicts to floggings. Noel Samuda and Walford Ferguson, sentenced in separate cases, appealed, saying it is inhumane. The British Privy Council, which serves as the supreme court for most former colonies in the Caribbean, recently tightened restrictions on the practice.
— *AP, Kingston*

Students riot

THOUSANDS of Indonesian students surged on to the streets in an anti-government demonstration, torching a policeman's motorcycle before tear-gas shells forced them back on to their campus. The protest at the University of North Sumatra in Medan, at the forefront of protests against President Suharto, came after the campus was closed for a week in the apparent hope of cooling passions.
— *Reuters, Medan*

Allies work on carrot-and-stick package to halt Kosovo's carnage

ROME (AP) — The Contact Group of nations was yesterday debating incentives and penalties to stop Yugoslavia's military crackdown in the mainly Albanian province of Kosovo.

The group monitoring Yugoslav is struggling to deal with escalating violence in the province, which threatens to spill over into neighbouring Albania. They fear that Greece and Turkey could be drawn in to the fighting. Italian diplomats said the talks were focusing on three areas: how to start a concrete dialogue between Albanian separatists in the province and Belgrade; a carrot-and-stick package; and how to stop the violence spreading to Albania.

Representatives from the group's nations, which comprise Britain, France, Germany, Italy, Russia and the United States, worked into the evening to come up with a joint statement.

A potential sanction would be a stepped-up freeze on foreign investment in Yugoslavia, whose economy already is suffering. Other potential punishments mentioned were a hold on Yugoslav assets abroad and a trade ban.

The French government yesterday called for "additional pressure" from the international community to prevent the situation in the province from getting worse. "France wants real results in Rome, a strong signal," French foreign ministry spokeswoman, Anne Gazeau-Secret, said in Paris.

The US has said it is ready to adopt unspecified measures on its own if the group cannot agree on tougher sanctions. But the Contact Group is holding out the incentive of steps to end Yugoslavia's international isolation if it responds favourably.

Serb security forces launched military operations on 28 February, saying that they were countering militant ethnic Albanian separatists. About 150 people have been killed since then.

The Serbs consider Kosovo vital to their identity as a nation, but of the population of two million, nine out of ten people are Albanians. They seek autonomy, something which Yugoslavia's leader, Slobodan Milosevic, has refused.

In March, the United Nations Security Council sought to pressure Mr Milosevic to grant some degree of autonomy to the province by imposing an arms embargo, although the move was largely symbolic since both sides were well-armed.

Fear grips India as Aids epidemic looms closer

By Peter Popham
in New Delhi

IN A VILLAGE outside Madras in south-east India on Sunday, a mob surrounded a young man, beat him unconscious, then poured petrol on him and burned him to death. Lynch killings are not all that rare in rural India even today. What made the murder at Cheneerkuppam exceptional was its connection with Aids.

According to some of the villagers, speaking to two journalists from the *Indian Express* who happened to be driving through at the time, the youth had Aids, and had been threatening to get even with society by injecting passers-by with HIV-infected blood. Last year there was a spate of such grisly menaces in Madras. Others described the dead man as carrying those universal symbols of the transient and untrustworthy, a cellphone and a pager, as well as a syringe. When the rumour of what he was trying to do spread through the village, the mob gathered and murdered him. Four policemen who rushed to the scene were unable to persuade the crowd to let him go.

The gruesome incident highlighted the fact that while, in terms of the numbers of people affected, India can fairly be described as the Aids capital of the world, the levels of ignorance and superstitious fear of the disease are practically medieval. India's poverty and grossly inadequate health-care system mean the incidence of HIV and Aids is massively under-reported. While the state's Aids watchdog, the National Aids Committee (NACO), estimates that there are 70,000 HIV cases in the country and 6,000 Aids cases, the independent Indian Health Organisation (IHO), based in Bombay, puts the HIV number at 7 million and the figure for full-blown Aids sufferers at 500,000. The head of IHO, India's most prominent campaigner for Aids awareness, Dr IS Gilada, believes that by 2001, in the most optimistic estimate, there will be 20 million HIV cases in the country and 2 million cases of Aids.

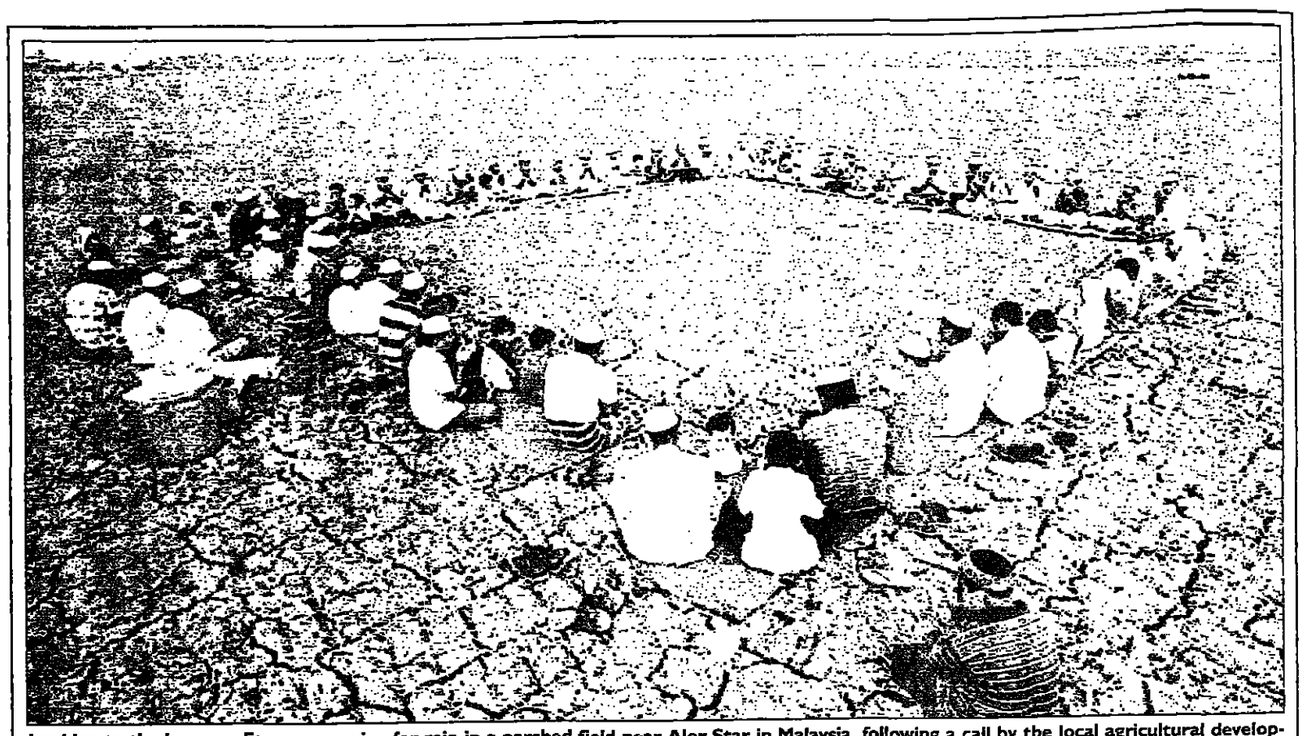
Yet India as a whole seems frighteningly unprepared for the raging epidemic that is on the way. Among the illiterate there is the sort of hysterical fear manifested on Sunday in Cheneerkuppam, only the latest case in which suspected Aids sufferers have been banished or killed and the communities they come from ostracised. "Rumours," as Dr Gilada puts it, "spread faster than HIV." But among the educated, the prevailing attitude is one of impregnable complacency, and a level of ignorance not much superior to that of the villages.

A study carried out two years ago involving 25 veteran Delhi GPs who participated in an Aids awareness programme organised by the Rajiv Gandhi Foundation, revealed amazing ignorance. Six of the 25 did not know what Aids stood for; many believed it could be transmitted by saliva, tears, dirty laundry, or shared crockery or swimming pool water. Three believed that aspirin was an effective treatment.

Aids is seen in India as a foreign disease, a problem of the the decadent West. Among the respectable, sex outside marriage is supposed not to happen, so the diseases of promiscuity are swept under the carpet, too.

When the Hollywood actor Richard Gere appeared at Aids fund-raising events in Delhi and Bombay earlier this month, he was unable to contain his indignation.

"It is astonishing," he said, "that there are no medical facilities to fight the Aids menace that is threatening the country. You have not taken the issue seriously. The country will die if the Aids menace is ignored. India needs to begin at ground level as far as Aids is concerned, starting with educating people about the disease and its implications."



Looking to the heavens: Farmers praying for rain in a parched field near Alor Star in Malaysia, following a call by the local agricultural development authority that they should seek divine intervention in the country's worst drought for years Photograph: New Straights Times/Reuters

Chinese ban on pyramid sales sparks rioting

Peking fears same fate as Albania as get-rich-quick schemes gain ground

By Teresa Poole
in Peking

TEN people have been killed and 100 injured in riots in Hunan province following the Chinese government's decision this month to ban direct pyramid selling schemes.

It is the worst violence yet connected with an upsurge of the pyramid schemes, some operating as quasi-cults, which have seen hundreds of thousands of people flooding into central and southern China to sign up for the "get-rich-quick" scams.

Last week the State Council announced a ban on all direct-selling organisations, fearing China was facing the same fate as Albania, where the collapse of dodgy pyramid selling schemes prompted widespread violence.

In the central Chinese city of Wuhan, in a highly publicised recent example, 120,000 Chinese from all over the country poured into the city to sign up as sales staff for the Xingtian direct-selling organisation. The Wuhan scheme was typical of pyramid scams.

To join, applicants each had to pay 3,900 yuan (£300) for an exercise machine which cost 600 yuan in the market.

They then had to persuade friends and relations to buy the overpriced machine in order to receive commission.

But the fortune-hunters found their savings had disappeared on unsaleable machines, and angry sales staff took to the streets, with the police having to break up a demonstration of 50,000 people in the city.

It was reports of the Wuhan incidents which prompted last week's ban.

The government says the organisations are being run on the lines of religious cults, and Peking fears that if thousands are conned into losing their money, there could be a threat to social stability in these cities.

Yesterday's reports of serious violence come from the southern province of Hunan and seem to have involved angry sales staff who had not been able to recover money from pyramid schemes which have now been shut down.

The people running the schemes have generally disappeared since the ban was announced, or are refusing refunds for unsold goods.

According to reports, in Zhangjiajie, Hunan province, six people were killed and more than 100 injured in riots since the ban too effect.

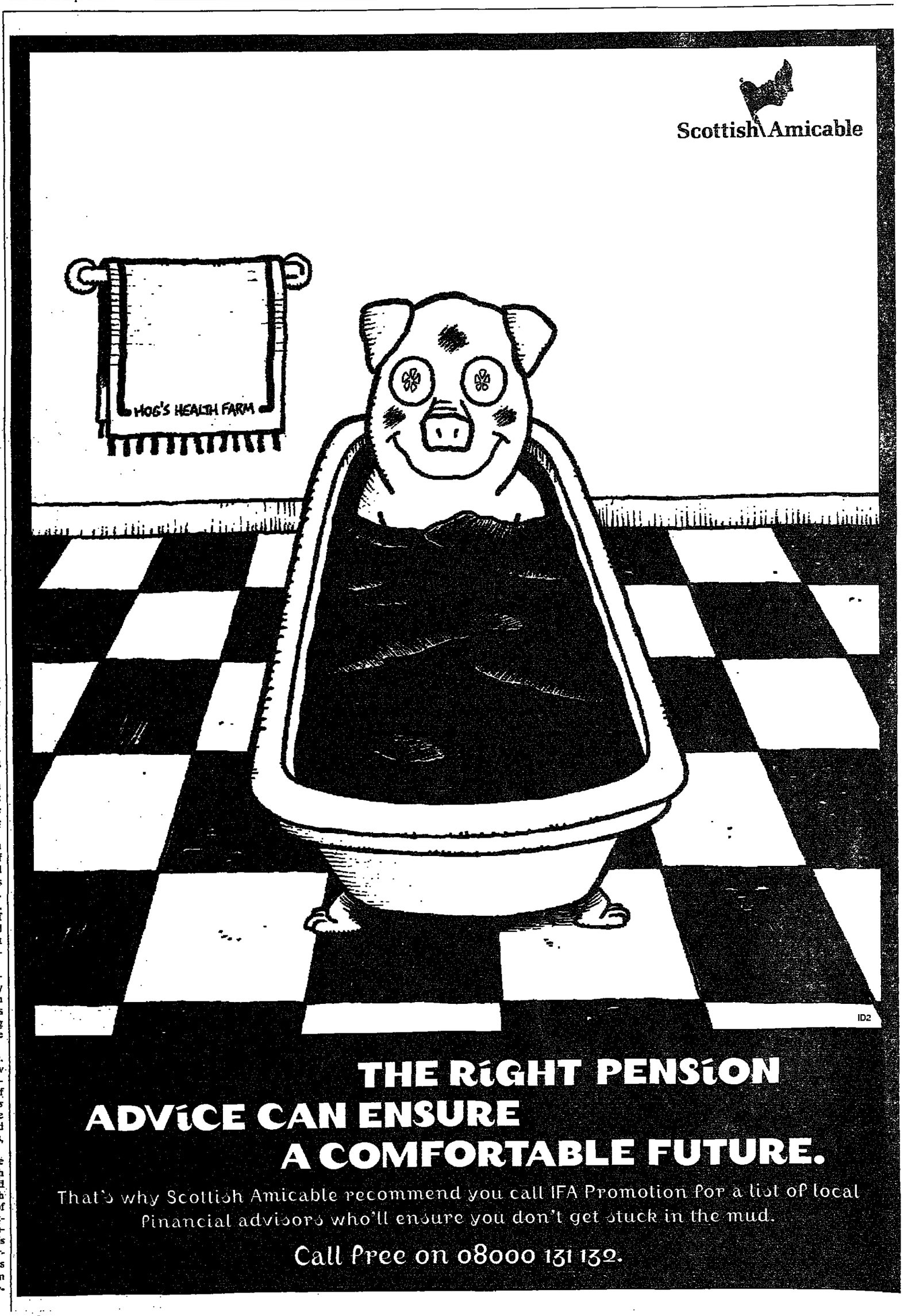
In Hengyang city, also in Hunan, thousands of sales staff of direct-selling firms attacked and killed four of the scheme's managers, officials told Reuters.

In Hunan's Pingtang town, police rescued six employers of direct-selling firms who had been held hostage by about 3,000 angry sales staff, the officials said.

The scale of the pyramid selling scams has only emerged very recently, but now that the ban has been implemented, China's state-controlled press is giving fairly extensive coverage to the problem.

In Hunan province alone, over 60 illegal firms have now shut down and direct-sales companies had laid off 60,000 of 180,000 sales staff, the *People's Daily* said on Monday. More than 42m yuan (£3.2m) had been returned to sales agents, the newspaper claimed.

The ban also applies to the big US direct-selling firms, such as Avon Products, Amway, and Mary Kay Cosmetics, which have spent a large amount of money setting up vast direct-sales networks in China. Washington is now insisting that this is a breach of World Trade Organisation rules, and wants Peking to be more selective in deciding which firms are covered by the new rules.



Silent protest: Marchers carrying candles in Guatemala City yesterday in memory of Bishop Juan Gerardi, a human-rights co-ordinator, who was assassinated at the weekend. Funeral services for the bishop will be held today Photograph: AFP

EU signs up to Kyoto global warming treaty

America lags in cutting greenhouse gases, writes **David Usborne** in New York

THE Deputy Prime Minister, John Prescott, yesterday led the nations of the European Union in putting their formal signatures to the Kyoto Treaty on global warming amidst stern warnings that a recalcitrant United States must also follow suit.

"The developing countries had to lead the way," said Mr Prescott after the signing ceremony at the headquarters of the United Nations in New York. Britain represented the EU as the current holder of the Union's presidency. All 14 other EU members also signed the document yesterday, as did the EU Commissioner for the Environment, Ritt Bjerregard.

Several obstacles still have to be overcome, however, before the treaty, negotiated at an international conference in Kyoto, Japan, last December, will become reality. Among those are doubts about the willingness of the US Congress to approve American ratification.

Delivering a blunt message to Capitol Hill, Commissioner Bjerregard said: "I hope ... we are stressing very clearly that we would like the programme President Clinton presented to the Congress to go through".

The treaty commits signatory countries to reduce their combined emissions of six key heat-trapping greenhouse gases by at least 5 per cent by the period 2008-2012. Emission levels of the three most important gases, carbon dioxide, methane and nitrous oxide, will be measured against a base year of 1990.

As well as the 15 EU members, 4 other countries signed the treaty yesterday – Canada, Monaco, Brazil and Norway. Japan became the first major industrial power to sign the document on Tuesday. As of last night, 34 countries had signed the treaty, also known as the Kyoto Protocol. The signatures are largely symbolic. For Kyoto to come into effect, 55 countries must ratify the treaty. The 55 must include developed countries in sufficient numbers to account for 55 per cent of global carbon dioxide emissions.

Under the terms of the treaty, the EU must cut emissions by 8 per cent, but will allowed to achieve the cuts as a whole. Member states still have to negotiate among themselves by how much each country will need to cut its own emissions to reach the EU's collective goal. A meeting to start the the negotiations will take place in June.

"The EU has shown international leadership by signing the climate change treaty," Nick Mabey of the World Wildlife Fund said yesterday. "But this position risks being undermined by internal squabbling on how much each EU country will cut its greenhouse gas emissions".

Mr Mabey warned that the EU will find it more difficult to resist efforts by the US Congress to weaken the Kyoto text if it cannot itself quickly reach a united position.

Republicans in Congress have served notice to the White House that they will not approve the protocol because it sets less binding commitments for developing countries, which increasingly have become responsible for greenhouse emissions. The US, which must cut emissions by 7 per cent, accounts for 36.1 per cent of carbon dioxide emissions. The EU is responsible for 24.2 per cent and Russia 17.4 per cent.

Mr Prescott is concerned that the US Congress may attempt to exploit loopholes in the protocol, especially by buying emission permits from Russia to mitigate the effect of Kyoto on the US economy. A follow-up meeting to Kyoto, to consider the trading of targets and permits internationally, is scheduled to take place in Buenos Aires in November.

Scientists estimate that if the Kyoto protocol should fail and its provisions be abandoned, heat-trapping gas emissions would grow by 29 per cent by 2010.

First black army leader

PRESIDENT Nelson Mandela named a former anti-apartheid guerrilla leader to South Africa's top military post, making him the first black ever to lead the armed forces, the President's spokesman said yesterday.

Lieutenant General Siphiwe Nyanda, 47, who led ANC fighters in sabotage campaigns and attacks, was named by Mr Mandela to succeed General Georg Meiring as head of the South African National Defence Force.

— *AP, Pretoria*

Swedes vote

THE Swedish Parliament ratified the Amsterdam treaty, expanding the European Union's powers, despite calls for a national referendum on the treaty by some members.

The vote was 226 in favour and 40 against, with seven abstentions. Sweden and Germany are the only EU countries that have ratified the treaty so far.

— *AP Stockholm*

Rare breed

A CALF with two heads was born in Ohio at the weekend. The Holstein calf, named Reflection, was born on Garry Slife's farm in Independence, 140 miles from Des Moines. The calf has almost a normal head, and another "about where its right ear is supposed to be," Mr Slife said. "It has four eyes and two noses and three ears."

— *AP, Des Moines*

Yeltsin's new cabinet leaves Russia playing spot the difference

By Phil Reeves
in Moscow

FIVE WEEKS after Boris Yeltsin plunged Russia into political upheaval by sacking his entire government, the lasting extent of the change is becoming clear – leaving Russians to wonder what the fuss was about.

As the aging president and his boyish prime minister, Sergei Kiriyenko, reassemble the pieces by appointing a new cabinet, a picture is emerging of an administration which is committed to economic reforms, but has yet to establish a claim to be either liberal or committed to the rules of democracy.

Moreover, although key figures have gone the new lot look remarkably similar to the old.

At the top of the cabinet (which is still incomplete) are three men in young middle-age who can be expected to push ahead the transition to a market economy: Mr Kiriyenko himself, and two deputy prime ministers: Boris Nemtsov and Viktor Khristenko. The latter is a little-known junior finance minister from Chelyabinsk who, like the 35-year-old Mr Kiriyenko, has less than a year's experience of Moscow politics. Mr Khristenko, a former economics teacher, first came to Moscow on the insistence of Anatoly Chubais, who was Mr Yeltsin's economic guru until he was sacked in March.

Outside the realm of economics, it is unclear what political ground Mr Khristenko occupies.

Outside the economic sphere, Mr Yeltsin's new cabinet reveals the president's wary, conservative approach to governing. Three years ago, the Russian foreign ministry was under the leadership of Andrei Kosyrev, who was broadly pro-western. Now that portfolio remains in the hands of Yevgeny Primakov, a wily veteran in foreign intelligence who is far more interested in re-inforcing Russia's diplomatic credentials as a world player, one which is capable of counterbalancing the West, than in buttering up Washington or Brussels.

And while the president is surrounded in the Kremlin by young, progressive advisers, including his younger daughter Tatyana, he has been careful to keep the security apparatus under strong control. Interior Minister Sergei Stepashin was one of those behind the decision to send the tanks into Grozny in 1994.

All this amounts to further evidence that, at bottom, expediency drives Boris Yeltsin far harder than ideology.

■ In a separate development Boris Berezovsky, Russia's best known tycoon, was yesterday appointed executive director of the Commonwealth of Independent States in an effort to revitalise the divided, and near defunct, organisation.

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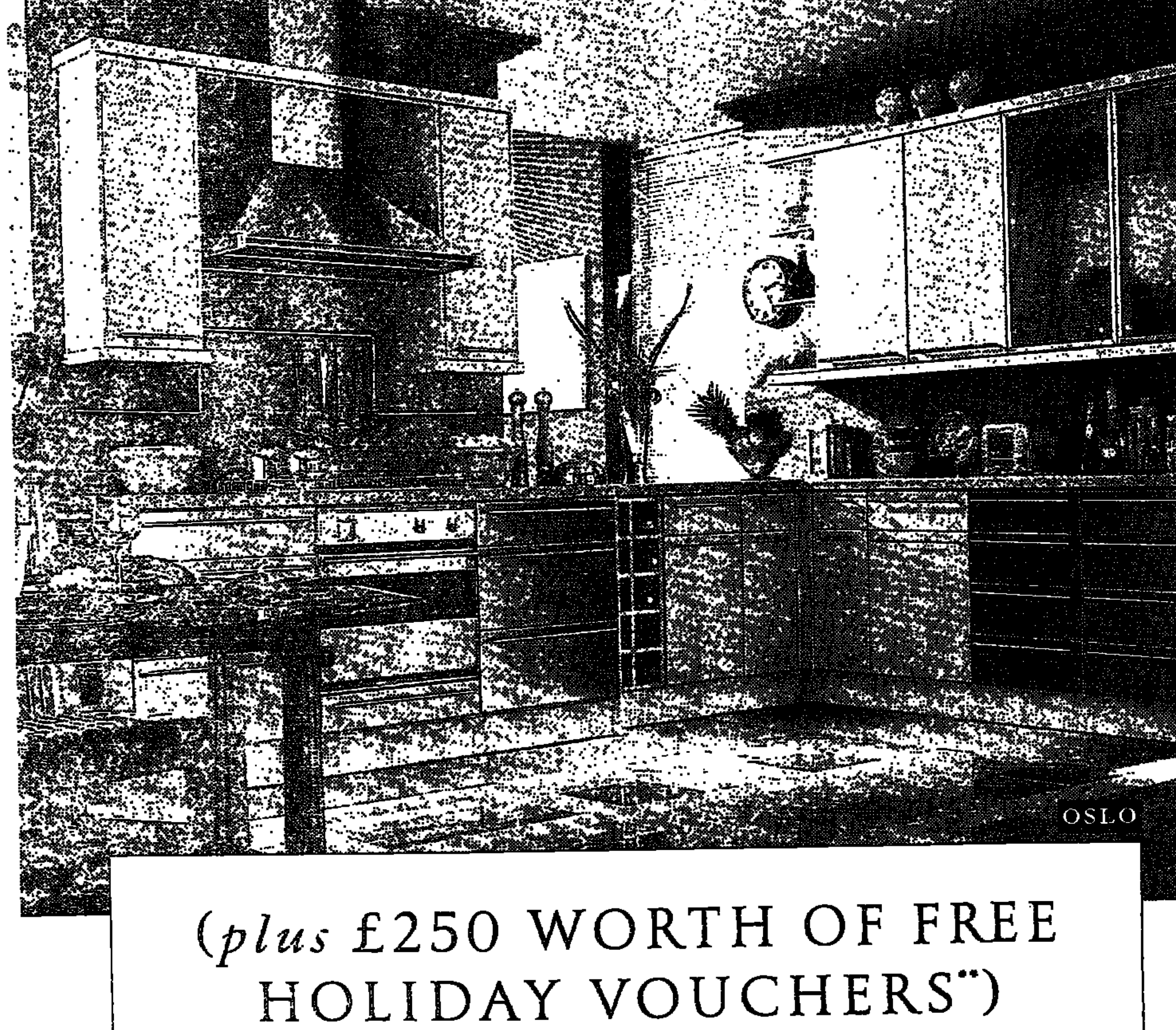

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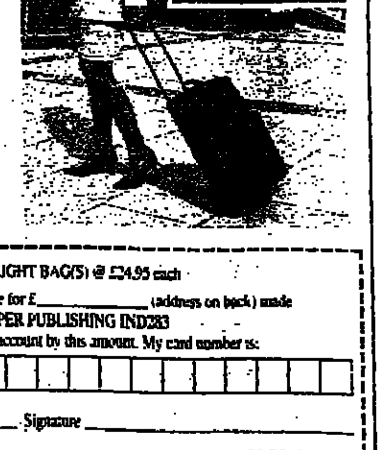

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The double life of Mrs B

Cherie Booth has had a great year; maybe Cherie Blair should follow her lead, says **Ann Treneman**

LABOUR

1 YEAR ON

CHERIE B may have thought that her year began badly. It certainly began early. It was the morning after the landslide of the night before and, you may remember, Cherie was wearing winceyette. We know this because the doorbell rang and, perhaps because she was sleepy, Cherie forgot that she was not allowed to be normal. So she answered the door. Waiting for her was something orange, as in a bouquet of orchid and pampas grass, and something flash, as in a French photographer. The Winceyette Moment was front-page news.

"When she saw the pictures, she said: 'Oh, what have I done?'" said her husband and spokesman, Tony Blair. He said that her mother told her not to worry: the nation will sympathise. Her mother was right, though Tony couldn't help but add this thought: "Actually, the picture was very Cherie. She's not a morning person. I am, which is one of our outstanding incompatibilities."

It was also noteworthy because it may have been Cherie's last recorded normal moment as a unified woman. Soon we were all treated to the weirdest moving day ever – remember the shoe racks going in through the front door? - and then Cherie did something very odd indeed. She became two people and that, whatever way you spin it, is not a normal thing to do.

One woman is known as Mrs Blair. She is mute but has good hair (which is to be expected with André of Michaeljohn popping in almost every day). She is superb at holding on to her husband's arm. She excels at silently attending summits. She smiles well, if lop-sidedly. She has a full-time spin doctor. Her husband is devoted but, sadly at times, not mute: "I'm in love with Cherie. I still feel like that about her. Cherie is the rock on which my life is built. I do honestly belief that I would not have done the things that I have done without her. She keeps me anchored," he told Lynda Lee-Potter in the *Daily Mail* this month. He then revealed that last month they had celebrated their 18th wedding anniversary with dinner at Chequers and playing their song, *My Cherie Amour*.

The other woman is called Cherie Booth. She is a top barrister who has declared that she would like to be a judge. She already sits as a part-timer. Her head of chambers, Michael Beloff QC, says she is doing more now than before, though it may just be more high profile. Cherie Booth speaks out often and uses her eloquence to great effect (and, occasionally, even takes on her husband's Government). In the past year she has defended the rights of lesbians, dyslexics and beer-drinkers. Now that's a constituency. "She gets her stimulation at work," one friend said. "She still does her job – if you read the papers it would look as if she doesn't do any work, but she's been into chambers every day this week."

This act must take a lot of effort, but the spin doctors are pleased. They say it has been a good year for both Cheries and perhaps the greatest triumph of all is that there is even a Cherie Booth to be writing about one year on. Last spring the press was full of hints about how difficult it might be for the Prime Minister's wife to be a working woman (these last two words were usually whispered). After all, even Hillary Rodham Boudicca Clinton had not found it possible to practise law and be a First Lady. Obviously Cherie would never be a Norma Major but no doubt – more whispers here – she would have to slow down a bit and spend more time with the children.

Wrong. Not too many days after the racks of shoes came in through the front door, Cherie Booth selected a pair to wear as she walked right back out on her way to work. Many of us do this every day (without photo-opportunities, though) and it did not pass us by that Cherie Booth was one of us. "Her great triumph is that, very quietly, she has done something revolutionary," said media consultant Scarlett McGwire. "Very quietly she has said, this is me and everybody has just accepted it. She is a modern, professional, Nineties woman and she shows that it can be done."

Downing Street types insist that Mrs Blair has had an equally good year. They say that she is finally becoming "the people's first lady". Let's hope not. In fact, Cherie Booth had a better year than her silent partner – and all because of things beginning with the letter "c". First there was the cat. Remember Humphrey and that disgusting on-camera cuddle? It looked fake and, as Humphrey would no doubt tell us if only we could find where he has been banished to, it was. I don't think it is Mrs Blair's fault that she hates cats, but "friends" say that she is not the only one. Tony does too, but it was Mrs Blair who took the blame. And she wasn't even allowed a meow in her own defence.

Then there was the Catholicism thing. Is she leading Tony to Rome? asked the headlines. Again she smiled silently. But neither of these amount to anything as compared to the chic thing. It must be exhausting having to please the style editors of every British newspaper, but this seems to be the case ever since someone noticed that the Labour Party leader's wife dressed like a real person – badly but with lots of pizzazz. As her spokesman, Tony Blair, has said: "Suddenly she was being picked to pieces. Everything from her figure, her hair, her smile, her clothes, the way she looked at me ..."

Well, in the intervening years she's changed everything but that soppy look. Two stone has gone, designer dresses have been added, hairdressers enlisted. Nowadays the lips are glossed and the nails buffed. But still, there is no pleasing the *Daily Mail* on some subjects, especially when the PM's wife will insist on wearing sparkly underskirts, knee-length gold frock coats and fussy scarves. All of these (and more) were worn during her trip to America in February and the *Mail* was appalled: "The truth is that Cherie is never more insecure than when it comes to her dress sense. The woman who so brilliantly found the right style for her at the time of the General Election seems just as suddenly to have lost it again ... Cherie looked like she couldn't decide what to wear and so threw the whole lot on for good measure."

Through all of this, Mrs Blair must simply smile through gritted teeth and glossed lips. It sounds painful but the spin doctors don't care. They say they have wrong-footed the Tories, who wanted to "do a Hillary" and make the Prime Minister's wife an issue. And, they say, by the summer she will be "speaking" through her own website.

This, however, is not really the same as hearing an actual voice. There is something childish about a country that cannot handle the idea that a Prime Minister's wife can be more than a silent style statement. Perhaps in her second year at Number 10, the two women who make up Cherie B will be allowed to speak as one again. Then, at least, we won't have to listen to that spokesman Tony all the time.

Tony's cronies: the A-list

AFTER he waves off the Gallaghers at the end of the next glittering Downing Street bash, the Prime Minister might do worse than to pick up *Alan Clark's Diaries* for his bedtime reading.

"There are no true friends in politics. We are all sharks, circling and waiting for traces of blood to appear in the water," the then defence minister confessed just after the fall of Margaret Thatcher in 1990.

There are few signs of blood yet, of course, but who can Tony Blair really trust? Who are in the charmed circle that he can draw around him with confidence, knowing that they have no one's best interests at heart but his own?

Labour's first year has brought just one big surprise in this department: one name notably absent from the list is Gordon Brown. Of course the Chancellor is still a close political contact of the Prime Minister, and the two men still meet very regularly. But the publication of a biography revealing Brown's bitterness over the 1994 deal which, he feels, deprived him of the leadership, has left its scars. Recent networking by the Chancellor with constituencies and the unions has been interpreted as an attempt to garner support.

In other areas, though, there have been no such surprises. The few men regarded as closest to Mr Blair know well that if and when that blood begins to seep, it will probably be mixed with their own.

Alastair Campbell, the Prime Minister's press secretary, has been a constant and loyal aide, pulling together speeches and – most memorably – helping to craft the killer soundbites with which Mr Blair is apt to carry off the headlines. The "people's princess" line which struck a chord after Diana's death almost certainly had some of his magic worked into it.

Other loyalists who owe their senior positions to the Prime Minister include Peter Mandelson, the Minister without Portfolio, and Lord Irvine, the Lord Chancellor. Both still enjoy close and regular contact with Mr Blair.

Key advisers in and around Downing Street include Angi Hunter, responsible for presentation and planning and a friend of Mr Blair since college days in Oxford. Another old legal friend, Charles Falconer, has become Solicitor General and now sits in the House of Lords. He came close to selection for a safe Labour seat during the 1997 election campaign, but pulled out at the last minute for family reasons.

Philip Gould, who played a key part in Labour's 1992 election campaign and who now runs a polling agency, regularly advises the Prime Minister on how public opinion is running.

Jonathan Powell, formerly Labour's chief of staff, now holds the same position in Downing Street. Other former Labour staffers who have made the transition include David Miliband, Peter Hyman and Liz Lloyd, all of whom now reside in the Number 10 policy unit. While Mr Miliband is in overall charge, Mr Hyman has a significant input into Mr Blair's speeches and Ms Lloyd briefs him each week for Prime Minister's Questions.

Geoff Mulgan, centre-left guru and founder of the Demos think tank, has been brought into Downing Street to oversee the Social Exclusion Unit, expected to be a major driving force in terms of policy direction over the next few years. Other recent acquisitions include two journalists, David Bradshaw from the *Daily Mirror* and Philip Bassett from the *Times*, who have been appointed to the new Strategic Communications Unit and who are often the true authors of the Prime Minister's newspaper articles.

Further out from the centre of power, but still wielding a certain amount of power and influence, are a number of key business advisers. Among them are Sir Richard Sykes, chairman and chief executive of Glaxo Wellcome. It was rumoured last year that Downing Street encouraged a planned merger with another major drugs firm, SmithKline Beecham.

Lord Hollick, Chief Executive of United News and Media and a long-time Labour supporter, is another important business contact, as is the recently ennobled Michael Levy, the chairman of M&G Records and the Prime Minister's tennis partner, as well as a major figure in Labour's pre-election fundraising effort.

Chris Haskins, Chairman of Northern Foods, is another businessman close to the heart of New Labour. He is also one of a clutch who have been offered key posts on task-forces and review groups. Mr Haskins heads up the Better Regulation Task-force. Meanwhile, Alec Reed of Reed Personnel Services has been asked to tackle a teacher recruitment crisis, and his firm has won a contract to pilot the Welfare to Work scheme.

More glamorously, the pop star Mick Hucknall is on the Music Industry Forum while the film-maker Lord Puttnam and record company boss Alan McGee are on the Creative Industries Task-force.

And who does the Prime Minister choose to relax with, when he has a rare chance to do so? On most weekends he and his family can be found at Chequers, where Alastair Campbell, his partner Fiona Millar and their children may join them. Others who are part of the Blair's social circle include the Charles Falconers, the Angi Hunters and Peter Thompson, Mr Blair's friend and mentor from Oxford days, with whom he still maintains contact.

Fran Abrams

BLAIRSPEAK: IT'S A DELIVERY THING

HISTORIANS of the future could be forgiven for wondering if New Labour was some kind of haulage company. Why else would the chief executive of "UK Plc," as Robin Cook called it last week, bang on so hard about "delivering?"

"Delivery," to New Labour, is the linguistic equivalent of a "key seat" – a sort of solid target to focus on amid a sea of verbal uncertainty. Labour is "trying to deliver" on its promises, Tony Blair says. "I am absolutely confident that on schools, on hospitals ... we are going to deliver." "Here is what we believe we can deliver to you as a Government." During the election there was even a man in charge of "message delivery".

New Labour parlance delivers many things. Just put your cross in the box and Tony will bring "the big picture" right to your door. If you want, he can also provide "a beacon to the rest of the world". Or for a small fee you might like "high ideals and hard choices".

The one thing he will not deliver is "boom and bust." What you order is what you get, though: "We ran for office as New Labour. We govern as New Labour." Of course, Tony's firm delivers to "the many, not the few." And it believes in "levelling up, not levelling down". It is just, decent, compassionate.

New Labour delivers with feeling. Tony takes his public right into his heart. "I do believe" that people just want us to get on with the job, he tells us. "I hope people feel, I want them to feel, that this is their Government, that it's a people's Government."

Privately, you see, Tony believes we are in a "post-euphoria, pre-delivery" stage at the moment. Just privately, mind. But he didn't mind confiding this personal thought to Sir David Frost on the telly on 11 January this year. And on 6 February at a White House press conference with President Clinton. Then, just in case we'd missed it, his spokesman reminded us on 16 March that "Tony has talked about a 'post-euphoria, pre-delivery' stage."

OK, so the odd carefully-crafted nugget creeps in here and there. But Tony spends a lot of time in church, so he has plenty of opportunity to think. That must have been why his last Labour conference speech sounded so much like a rewrite of the Lord's prayer.

"Let our first thanks be to the British people. You kept faith with us. And we will keep faith with you ... And thanks to those that led before me..."

In Government, of course, there's less time to think up new word deliveries. "This is no time for soundbites," he told us as he flew to Belfast just before Easter, "But I feel the hand of history on our shoulders, I really do."

Fran Abrams

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Designs on the north

Nonie Niesewand sets her sights on the new extension at the Tate Liverpool and Britain's biggest ever exhibition

Contrasts: The new sculpture gallery at the Tate Liverpool, Richard Long's 'Small White Pebble Circles' (foreground) and Richard Deacon's 'This, That and The Other' (behind). On the right is a cleaner's trolley *Photograph: Tom Pilston*

A SINKING ship, "SOS" by American artist Mark Dion, is a bold way to dramatise the new top-floor sculpture gallery by Michael Wilford Associates at the Tate in Liverpool, which re-opens on 23 May. The show is part of artranspennine98, an exhibition of international contemporary visual art spanning 120 miles of the Pennines, from Liverpool to Hull. Heavy with symbolism about the closure of the dockyards, "SOS" makes the connection between regional history, the maritime architecture of the city and the Tate building, originally a 19th-century rum warehouse, according to Lewis Biggs, director of the Tate Liverpool and curator of the Pennine extravaganza.

Biggs doesn't think small. This exhibition links 40 sites across the Pennine Way (see below) with international modern artists, who, over the past three years, have familiarised themselves with the region's food and football, pubs and parks, people and press. Then, they revitalise the redundant industrial sites with modern art. It is a story of our times. Vast factories which once housed industrial workers or warehouses by the docks are brought back to life as galleries. And they make brilliant galleries with the right architectural intervention.

The Tate Liverpool is a success story. With its stone floors, brick-vaulted walls and iron columns, the conversion in 1984 by James Stirling with Michael Wilford drew such big crowds that they have had to expand beneath the original ironwork roof. The gallery closed for more than a year while Wilford worked on the extension.

Wilford wears a purple shirt with a red-and-black spotted tie as he outlines the final phases of the new sculpture gallery with its iron colonnades and blue and orange metal painted facade. The trouble with being in the slipstream of a giant such as Stirling is that everyone thinks the original Tate conversion was typical of Stirling's formalist, monumental genius. But the orange, sickle moon-shaped bar, with a round blue bar at its core, is pure Wilford.

Wilford loves colour. He arranges bold geometric buildings on site like an abstract painter, shifting blocks of colour and collaging simple geometric forms within the fabric of buildings. Sometimes he refers to his buildings as layered cakes. The British Embassy in Berlin, for example, due to open in 2002, is a bit of a Battenberg cake in purple and blue. Sandwiched between an old peoples' home and a hotel on a historic Reichstag site, it is controlled by a town planner obsessed by historicism and 18th-century street elevations.

But Wilford loves that challenge. Peeking through the rigorously geometric and neo-classical stone facade are strange, abstract, colourful, metal buildings. The ambassadors suite is a smoky glass rectangle, the entrance a silvery cog, and conferences take place in a purple cylinder. But there is nothing playschool about his primal forms. Refreshingly simple in appearance, it is hi-tech, smart architecture inside.

In the six years since Stirling died, Wilford has established a separate identity, acknowledged last year when he won the Stirling Prize. "I was surprised at first, then elated. Surprised, because I didn't think they would give the prize to the partner with the same name as the practice."

Many would not recognise Stirling's influence in Wilford's new work. His sandcastle-like Lowry Centre on the tip of Salford Quays is strong enough to stand up to Daniel Libeskind's fragmented, glass shard-like proposal for a war museum next door. At Bilbao, his railway station links with Norman Foster's Metro and is shadowed by Frank Gehry's Guggenheim, yet it is not dwarfed.

Wilford is shortlisted for the Scottish Parliament. "We're not formulaic architects. So you can't predict a rotunda chamber, though I know that Dewar wants it designed in such a way as to not encourage adversarial debate. The challenge is to make a forum that encourages lively debate." Naturally, he has inspected the controversial Holyrood site. "It's an excellent location. Not too low down but overlooked from Salisbury Crags and Calton Hill, a very prominent location on Royal Mile with the potential to be a real anchor." And, as we know from his years with Stirling, Wilford makes a really good anchorman.

A canvas that stretches from coast to coast

Fifteen million people live inside a new showcase for modern art which follows the Pennine Way

ARTRANSPENNINE98 has a suitably stretched name for a modern art exhibition that runs east to west across 120 miles of the Pennine Way. More than 50 artists from 15 countries made new work for different locations after exploring the area.

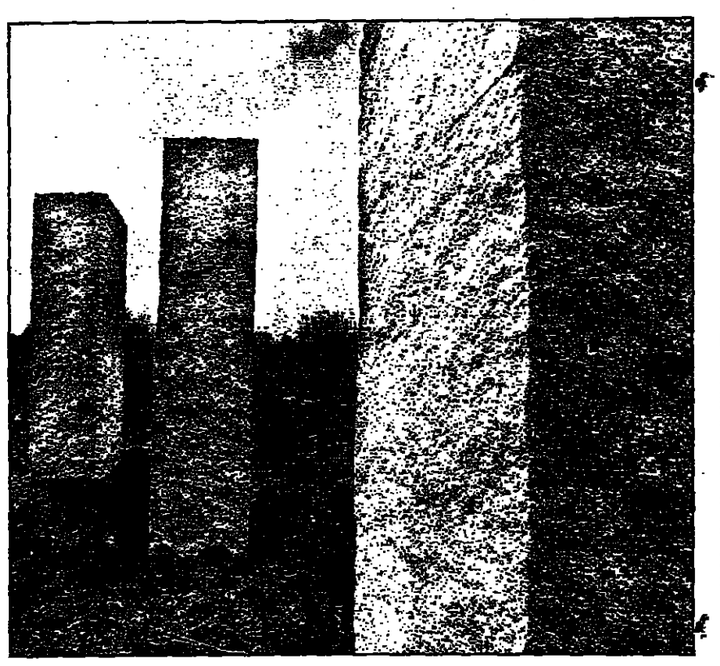
At a disused colliery in Greater Manchester, German sculptor Ulrich Ruckriem planted vast stone slabs like Stonehenge. Their windbreak is a row of terraced houses, but they overlook a dizzying view of the Pennines. It is a permanent installation and Ruckriem hopes residents will picnic there. Just as the Angel of the North has its adjacent pub of the same name in Gateshead this sculpture – and all the others – will probably spawn a whole new tourist industry. Already, bus trips are being planned to take art lovers to the 40 sites.

Some are outdoors, like the walled fruit garden at the Storey Gallery in Lancaster by American artist Mark Dion. Others are installations in galleries or ruined medieval chapels. A permanent monument to Joseph Beuys opens in Leeds city centre and a double-decker mobile home will be parked inside the Henry Moore Institute by Dutch artist Atelier van Lieshout.

The biggest exhibition ever to open in Britain, it covers an area bigger than Belgium. Fifteen million people live in it. But more interesting is the new style of art curatorship pioneered by Lewis Biggs of the Tate Liverpool with Robert Hopper of the Henry Moore Institute and £1.7million lottery funding from the Arts Council. By mixing with the locals, the artists have addressed their fears and hopes, their history and culture. It is a whole new concept of urban regeneration.

ARTRANSPENNINE98 runs from 23 May to 16 August. The catalogue is published tomorrow, including information about all the artists and the venues. It costs £3 from artranspennine 98, Ducie House, Ducie Street, Manchester M1 2JW. For recorded information, call 0161 950 3523.

Nonie Niesewand



Symbols: Ulrich Ruckriem's stones at an old Manchester colliery Tom Pilston

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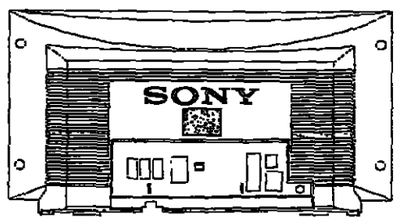

KV-28FD1E: view from the rear side

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DILEMMAS

At 46, am I too old for a job?

VIRGINIA IRONSIDE

Kate is 46 and her job applications have met with rejections or silences. She feels her age works against her. Should she lie about her age as she looks quite young?

WHEN I used to work on a women's magazine there was a very old lady called Violet in the letter-answering department. She used to totter in at 10am, fall asleep at her desk, eat her sandwiches, have another little snooze, and spend the last couple of hours looking vacantly out of the window.

This was a woman who had lied about her age – by some 15 years – and although it was quite humane of the company to allow her to use the office as an old people's home, it was extremely irritating for the others who had to do her work. It was also irritating to the unknown person who could have done with her job had she retired, and probably stressful for Violet herself who would have been better treated and more comfortable in a retirement home.

I'm not saying that Kate might end up like this, but lying is always a dangerous way to start anything, particularly a new job, and she might well get found out and face instant dismissal. If she didn't get caught out at her medical, she'd get trapped when she joined the firm's pension plan. And let's say it was just a tiny firm she joined, and she wasn't found out, every time another crow's foot arrived, or a breast sagged or a tooth went yellow she'd be panicking that someone would catch on.

And, anyway, how many years should she take off? She's a woman in her forties, and to get down to her thirties she'd have to take a fair whack off to get to 38 (39 sounds too near 40). And if she's just thinking of taking a few years off, does she really think that reducing her age to 44 from 47 is going to make any difference at all? If she looks as young as she says why doesn't she just take her age off her CV altogether, leap into interviews all glossy and youthful and let her potential employers make up their own minds about her age until they ask?

What Kate doesn't seem to realise is that even young people send off CVs and get nothing but silence and rejection in return. Everyone is finding it hard to get jobs these days, and it is not uncommon to send off 500 job applications before you even get an interview. Is Kate blaming her age for a phenomenon that is actually universal? Indeed, there is more positive discrimination in favour of age now than in the past, as companies are realising that experience, reliability, and maturity are qualities to be cherished not dismissed.

Is Kate applying for the right jobs? If she is applying for jobs which involve editing the rock-gossip column on a teenage magazine or the role of child gymnast, obviously she's going to get a rejection at 46. Similarly, someone of 20 will get the thumbs down if they apply for jobs which require experience, like the deputy head of a school, or matron of a halfway house for addicts.

At a time when even graduates dripping with double-firsts, crawling with MAs, even those who have edited the university newspaper and been head of the student's union, when even these find they have to wait six months to get a job, someone of 46, who is no longer a spring chicken, may well find they have to wait at least a year before they can find another job.

Kate should keep applying, keep waiting, keep hoping, and eventually she should be lucky.

Kate should realise several companies do searches, such as Reports Direct, which runs a CV validation service, including address and census validation, employment record, exam results... Re-interpreting your career is one thing, but the moral and legal implications (including instant dismissal) are not to be treated lightly.

Julia Drum

Like Kate, I am 46. I have been seeking work since last summer and have had no success despite having two degrees. I have little doubt that ageism is a cause. Kate would be very foolish to lie about her age as this would be found out in any pension arrangements. She should try to use informal contacts to find, or even create, a job in a smaller firm or in a contract role.

Frederick R Stansfield

My advice to Kate is don't. It can lead to embarrassment, as happened to me when stating my age as 45 instead of 47. I was very red-faced when asked to produce my birth certificate for the pension scheme.

J Gordon

Under no circumstances should Kate lie about anything on her CV. She will be quickly found out and branded as dishonest. But that does not mean that facts of which Kate may be less keen should be trumpeted at the top of her CV. I speak from experience, having retrained in computers and gained a full-time position at 56.

Clive Clancy

NEXT WEEK'S DILEMMA

Dear Virginia, I live with my boyfriend and we are very happy together. But I have recently been talking to people on the Internet and meeting people on e-mail, and one man in particular has become particularly friendly. He has a great sense of humour and I really enjoy chatting to him, and we've started to become quite intimate, exchanging kisses and hugs and even more. I think about him a lot, but would never be unfaithful, but am I betraying my boyfriend by having this relationship, even though this man and I will never meet in real life?

Yours, Angela

Letters are welcome, and everyone who has a suggestion quoted will be sent a bouquet from Interflora. *Send comments and suggestions to Virginia Ironside at the Features Department, The Independent, 1 Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5DL (fax 0171-293 2182), by Tuesday morning. If you have a dilemma of your own that you would like to share, please let me know.*

Bishop Juan Gerardi Conedera

THIS wasn't supposed to happen. Not any more. Until the savage attack last Sunday night which ended the life of Bishop Juan Gerardi, people had hoped and some had even dared to believe that the decades of political violence in Guatemala were at an end. As it turned out the only "true peace" that Gerardi was to know in his life as a bishop in war-torn Guatemala was in his first diocese of Verapaz – true peace – where he served as Pastor for six years until his election as Bishop of the Diocese of El Quiche in 1973.

Like more than a million of his compatriots, Gerardi was a refugee. The north of his diocese became the scene of the most tragic and bloodstained period of modern Guatemalan history. As military forces used scorched-earth tactics to empty war zones of civilians, countless thousands of impoverished Mayan Indians were brutalised and terrorised.

The villages of the Ixcan jungle – Mayalan, Cuarto Pueblo, Finca de San Francisco – became synonyms of massacre: a series of Guatemalan My Lais. In a land where socially committed Catholics were marked as subversives, peasant communities had to bury their Bibles in their gardens or suffer – as so many did – being rounded up in their village chapels and burned alive by government forces.

In Guatemala the Church could provide no sanctuary, no safe haven and no protection. Killing after killing robbed the diocese of priests and pastoral agents. It was with the heaviest of hearts that, in 1980, Gerardi took the unprecedented step of closing down the diocese. The conviction that this was the only way to reduce the attacks on his flock came after his own near escape from an assassination attempt and increasingly difficult confrontations with the regional military authorities.

Gerardi recalled his words to the army commander: "You are the killers, you are the enemies of the people. We have to be with the people: for this reason we are on the opposite side to you. Until you change there can be no dialogue, there can be no point of communication, there can be no accords between you and ourselves."

Exiled from his diocese, Gerardi was soon to be banished from his country. In 1982 the military government blocked his re-entry to Guatemala after meetings in Rome, where he was to spend the next two years. Like all exiles, Gerardi remained emotionally wedded to the land to which he was unable to return. His own survival among so many of his friends who had died lent him an air of sadness, of guilt and even of betrayal that he should not have shared their fate, or saved them from it.

I recall his pain when he spoke in 1985 of his hopes to set up a national human rights office. His efforts faltered, not for want of enthusiasm, but because he knew that anyone employed in such work would be signing their own death warrant. In 1989, however, the Archbishop of Guatemala, Prospero Penados, entrusted to him the task of setting up the Archdiocesan Human Rights Office and it was from this office that in 1995 he launched the Church's most cherished and most audacious project. "The Recovery of Historical Memory" – REMHI – was an attempt to ensure that there should be no forgetting the atrocites that had befallen Guatemala. In a country and a region where impunity hold sway, the REMHI project was a challenge.

Gerardi plunged himself with enthusiasm into his task. Teams of researchers travelled to the most isolated areas of the country to conduct painstaking interviews with victims and survivors of atrocities. They listened as widowed and orphaned families stammered and sobbed out their sufferings, uncovering buried memories, finding at last an audience for the pain which had been borne in silence for so many years.

On Friday 24 April the findings of the REMHI project were published. Two days later, Juan Gerardi was bludgeoned to death on his return home from dinner with his family. He was left faceless, like tens of thousands of faceless victims of the war.

Clare Dixon

Juan José Gerardi Conedera, priest: born Guatemala City 27 December 1922; ordained priest 1946; Bishop of Verapaces 1967-73; Bishop of El Quiche 1973-84; Auxiliary Bishop of Guatemala City 1984-98; died Guatemala City 26 April 1998.

Gerardi at a press conference last Thursday. Three days later he was beaten to death

Maria Torok

MARIA TOROK was a dissident voice in psychoanalysis.

Her version of psychoanalysis is a revision of Freudianism, divested of the Oedipus complex, the death drive, penis envy and the primal scene, yet imbued with the question of unconscious, infantile sexuality. It is, above all, designed to restore lines of communication with those intimate recesses of the mind that have been denied expression. In Torok's view, therapy in the light of predetermined concepts (such as Freud's theories on repressed incestuous wishes and castration, or Jacques Lacan's ideas about the symbolic order of language) runs the risk of reducing a person's genuine suffering to silence.

Born in Budapest in 1925 into a Jewish family of doctors, she emigrated to Paris in 1947, where she studied psychology and Rorschach (the interpretation of ink-blots) and worked as a child psychologist before training with the Paris Psychoanalytic Society. She practised psychoanalysis in Paris from 1956 to 1996.

In 1950 Torok met Nicolas Abraham, a fellow Hungarian Jew; he became her partner and frequent co-author. Together they embarked on a renewal of psychoanalysis: they showed that even the most fundamental Freudian theories needed to be revamped or discarded if they are inconsistent with the actual life experience of patients.

In *The Wolf Man's Magic Word* (1976; English translation 1986) and in *The Shell and the Kernel: renewals of psychoanalysis* (1978; English translation 1994), Abraham and Torok see the potential of psychoanalysis as a form of inquiry into the sources of mental suffering, and in searching for the means whereby humans can harmoniously overcome psychic pain.

In 1963, before feminist critiques of Freud, Torok rejected the Freudian concept of penis envy on clinical grounds. She argued that, if it exists at all, penis envy is not an anatomically determined and inalterable cause of women's behaviour. Rather than offering penis envy as a principle of explanation, as Freud did, Torok treats it as a symptom – a fantasy or myth, invented by girls to mask their forbidden desire for orgasm. The social implications of this view emerge with the clinical evidence Torok marshals about a girl's ability to achieve orgasm at an earlier age than boys.

Similarly, Abraham and Torok demote the Freudian Oedipus complex as the principal causative agent in psychopathology. In their eyes the Oedipus complex betokens the child's problematic detachment from the mother and not an incestuous desire for her; the father is introduced as a ploy that ruptures the mother-child union and mediates between the child and the outside world.

Extending the reach of the early Hungarian school, Abraham and Torok found that psychopathology arises most often from the disturbances of self-creation. They pinpointed two opposing mechanisms of psychic life: the activity of perpetual self-transformation in the face of internal or external changes; and the traumas that make self-transformation impossible.

The bulk of their work deals with how best to understand the devastation of trauma. Their investigation of the traumas that block the spontaneous work of self-transformation or "introjection" propelled them towards the discovery of new psychic and linguistic structures. These include the illness of "mourning" or "the crypt", the removal of unwanted, shameful, untoward or unbearable realities to an inaccessible "psychic tomb"; "incorporation", the secret embrace of an alien identity; and the "transgenerational phantom", the unwitting transmission of family secrets to our descendants. The discovery of these sources of psychic turmoil stemmed from Abraham and Torok's query: what leads people to make themselves unintelligible? Abraham and Torok understood that some patients seem to destroy the expressive power of language; they obscure beyond recognition the words that might reveal a traumatic secrets' existence to themselves or the outside world. Abraham and Torok used the term "cryptonomy" to describe the process.

After Abraham's death in 1975, Torok published his *Le Cas Jonas* (1981) and *Rhythms: on the work, translation and psychoanalysis* (1985; English translation 1996) and she formulated the hypothesis that some of Freud's theories may have their roots in his family's suppressed history.

Torok: work on trauma

Torok contends in her final book, *Questions for Freud: the secret history of psychoanalysis* (1995; English translation 1997), which I co-authored, that Freud unwittingly thwarted the progress of psychoanalysis by adopting contradictory and self-defeating methodologies. Torok's aim, then, was always to restore to psychoanalysis its own fundamental project, namely understanding psychological pain and promoting the freedom of each and every human being's inner quest for self.

Nicholas Rand

Maria Torok, psychoanalyst: born Budapest 10 November 1925; died New York 25 March 1998.

Peggy Garland

THE SCULPTOR Peggy Garland was compulsively frank all her long life, but among the small fibs she told about herself was that she had led a cautious existence. As a tiny child in about 1910 she stood at the entrance of London Zoo and told her nurse she wanted to see everything and go everywhere, "But not as far as the tigers". That, she liked to claim, was her motto. But by the time this old woman died the other day in Oxford she had poked a stick in just about every cage in the zoo, "especially the tigers' ".

A couple of heart attacks killed her a few weeks short of her 95th birthday. To the end Peggy Garland was sharp, empathic, quizzical, possessive and endlessly curious about the business of being human. She never ceased to be an artist. She wrote, painted and built a fine garden at her crowded little cottage in Eynsham but sculpture deserted her. Even five or six years ago she talked of finding the right block of stone to start carving again – "it has to be hard, very hard" – but that never happened. Her early work in bronze and stone is in public and private collections in Britain, Australia, Cape Town and New Zealand.

Peggy was born in 1903, one of three daughters of the painter and cartographer Jack Withycombe and his wife Ellen, of East Bergholt, in Suffolk, where the illustrator Edward Ardizzone remembered them as the "avant-garde family of the neighbourhood". While she was still a young child the Withycombe parents left for Malaya. This was a crucial event. "Very early in my life I knew I was on my own – that I could not rely on anything or anyone – that nobody can," she wrote only a week before she died. "So my safety was in my own hands and I'd better stay on deck and indeed at the wheel or I might go under, and how could I ever come up again?"

Peggy Garland was, in fact, attended all her life by family, loyal friends, servants and accomplices.

She sailed to South Africa in 1921, discovered sculpture at the Cape and returned to study at the Slade. There her circle included William Coldstream and Robert Medley. She returned to South Africa to work and teach. Some of her finest pieces were the African heads of these years sculpted with great sensual dignity. Peggy loved men and to the end of her life she was a formidable and agreeable flirt. Among lasting friendships from the Cape were those with Laurens van der Post and the conductor Leslie Heward.

The ship's doctor on one of her voyages home was the handsome Tom Garland. They married in the early 1930s and settled in the little world of Hampstead. Tom, a Communist, pioneered preventive health measures in London factories. Peggy sculpted, but rather less as she shouldered the work of raising her five children.

W.H. Auden was an old schoolfriend of her husband's and became her confidant in these years. In his "Last Will and Testament" Auden wished the sculptor Peggy –

> someone real in every feature.
> To Tom her husband, someone to help . . .

She packed him off to China in Tom Garland's tweed coat. This was also the time she first came to know her Australian cousin Patrick White. These two were so alike, game and feisty Withycombes, but, where the novelist imagined malice and evil lurking in the world around him, Peggy assumed innocence and good. She loved White and duelled with him for nearly 60 years, never flinching from his stare. In the end she was the best of all witnesses to his extraordinary life. And she kept his letters – among his finest; they are now safe in the National Library of Australia.

The Garlands sailed out to the kinder climate of New Zealand after the Second World War when it seemed Tom was losing his sight. Freed from the intimidating parish of radical London, Peggy became a public figure – giving talks, writing and reviewing books, and sitting on radio "brains trusts". She is remembered there still with gratitude and affection for putting heart into the scattered forces of civilisation in New Zealand in the 1950s. Her book *Journey to New China* was published in 1954 after a couple of intrepid journeys with political delegations to Peking.

Garland painted by her friend Jean Boswell, 1920s

The Garland house in Wellington overlooking the bay was a meeting place for writers, local grandees, left-wing thinkers, university people and hordes of children. When Patrick White came to stay in 1961, no one in that impressive household made such an impact on him as Peggy's sixth child to whom she had devoted so much of herself since he was born, brain-damaged, soon after the family's arrival in New Zealand. Philip Garland became the model for Arthur Brown, the simple man of unexpected gifts in White's 1966 novel *The Solid Mandala*.

The Garland marriage broke up and the family drifted back to England, first Tom and then the children intent on following their own paths in film, dance and the arts. Nick Garland became the cartoonist. His brother David is the painter and potter. Living in Eynsham near her sisters, Peggy painted and wrote. She never lost touch with her Wellington circle and a few months ago Massey University published *Dear Peggy*, a volume of memoirs and letters from her New Zealand friends.

In her mid-eighties she returned for a few months to paint the hills north of Wellington. She wrote then, "I am just where I want to be." But she returned to England and her role as the shrewd and rather deaf matriarch of the family, a wise old woman with an artist's instinct for what does and doesn't matter in our confused and messy lives. For such clarity of mind and heart she was trusted and deeply loved.

Peggy Garland died, quite *compos*, on 17 April. She is survived by five children – Philip died in 1986 – a tribe of grandchildren and all those friends around the world who have now had the last of her wonderful, erratic, almost illegible letters. Mine reached me only a day before I heard of her death. After the gossip, questions and discoveries there was a long PS written over a cup of tea at dawn. Peggy loved a PS. The plum tree in the pub over the road had burst into blossom. "This view of sky and things growing is so very valuable I don't think I could live here without it.

"I came on the line, 'Earth. Sky, a few dear names', in Auden's *Shield of Achilles*. That line does very well for me here."

David Marr

Margaret Withycombe, sculptor: born St Albans, Hertfordshire 24 May 1903; married 1932 Dr Thomas Garland (three sons, two daughters, and one son deceased; marriage dissolved); died Oxford 17 April 1998.

BIRTHS, MARRIAGES & DEATHS

BIRTHS

O'DONOVAN: On 20 March 1998, to Georgiana (née Bentliff) and Teigo, a daughter, Eleanor Katharine Melian.

DEATHS

RAPHAEL: Professor Ralph Alexander, CBE FRS, peacefully, on 27 April. Devoted husband of Prudence, much-loved father of Tony and Sonia, grandfather and great-grandfather. There will be no funeral; his body was donated as he wished for teaching and research. A memorial meeting will be arranged later. Donations in his memory welcomed by Coronary Care Unit, Addenbrooke's Hospital, Cambridge CB2 2QQ.

SOLOMON: John David (J.D.), father of Janet, Juliet and Gabriel. 25 April, aged 92. Cremation, Lewisham Crematorium, 9 May, 11am.

Gazette BIRTHS, MARRIAGES & DEATHS may be telephoned to 0171-293 2011 or faxed to 0171-293 2010, and are charged at £6.50 a line (VAT extra).

ROYAL ENGAGEMENTS

The Prince of Wales visits the Law Society, London WC2. **The Princess Royal**, Colonel-in-Chief, **The Royal Scots (The Royal Regiment)**, attends the Royal Caledonian Ball, the Grosvenor House Hotel, London W1. **The Duke of Gloucester** visits Krone UK Ltd, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire; visits Brunscombe Mill, Tetbury; visits Gloucester Young Builder's Project; opens Longhope's Nursery School; and visits the Newent Town Enhancement Scheme, Gloucestershire. **The Duke of Kent**, President, Engineering Council, attends the annual conference at the Institute of Marine Engineers, London EC3; and attends the Senate Dinner at the Royal Society of Aeronautical Engineers, London W1.

Changing of the Guard

The Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment mounts the Queen's Life Guard at Horse Guards, 10am; 1st Battalion Coldstream Guards mounts the Queen's Guard, at Buckingham Palace, 11.30am, band provided by the Welsh Guards.

Birthdays

King Carl XVI Gustav of Sweden, 52; Princess Juliana of the Netherlands, 89; Sir James Adams, consultant, Control Risks Group, former ambassador to Egypt, 66; Dr Gerald Aylmer, historian, 72; Mrs Janey Buchan, former MEP, 72; Mrs Barbara Calvert QC, a Recorder of the Crown Court, 72; Mr Frederick Chiluba, president of Zambia, 55; Miss Jill Clayburgh, actress, 54; Ms Clare Curtis-Tansley MP, 40; Sir Robin David, former circuit judge, 76; Mr Dickie Davies, sports commentator, 65; Lord Diamond, former leader of the SDP in the House of Lords, 91; Mr Michael Elder, actor and writer, 67; The Rev Paul Fiddes, Principal, Regent's Park College, Oxford, 51; Mr Leslie Grantham, actor, 52; Mr William Henry, former chairman, Coats Paton, 83; Mr Alfred Lomas MEP, 70; Lord McIntosh of Haringey, 65; Mr Keith Povey, HM Inspector of Constabulary, 55; Lord Sanderson of Bowden, former chairman, Scottish Conservative Party, 65; Professor Graham Upton, Vice-Chancellor, Oxford Brookes University, 54.

Anniversaries

Births: Jacques-Louis David, painter, 1748; Sir John Lubbock, first Baron Avebury, banker, writer and entomologist, 1834; Joachim von Ribbentrop, politician, 1893. **Deaths:** Edouard Manet, Impressionist painter, 1883; Alfred Edward Housman, poet and scholar, 1936; Beatrice (Potter) Webb, writer and socialist, 1943; Adolf Hitler, committed suicide 1945; Eva Braun, mistress of Adolf Hitler, committed suicide 1945; George Balanchine, choreographer, 1983; Muddy Waters (McKinley Morganfield), rhythm and blues singer, 1983. **On this day:** under an Edict issued by Galerius Valerius Maximianus, Christians were legally recognised by the Roman Empire, 311; General George Washington was inaugurated as first US president, 1789; Hawaii became a US territory, 1900; the World Fair opened in St Louis, Missouri, 1904; the New York World's Fair opened, 1939; the first London performance of the musical show *My Fair Lady* was staged, 1958; the *Brighton Belle* train made its last journey from Victoria to Brighton, 1972; four of President Richard Nixon's aides resigned over Watergate charges, 1973; the South Vietnamese government surrendered unconditionally to the Vietcong, 1975. **Today** is the Feast Day of St Eutropius of Saintes, St Forannan, St Gualfardus or Wolfhard, Saints Marianus, James and Others, St Maximus of Ephesus and St Pius V, pope.

Lectures

National Gallery: Mari Griffith, "Roads and Ways (v): Tintoretto, *The Origin of the Milky Way*", 1pm.
Victoria and Albert Museum: Olivia Callea, "Fashion in China through the Collections of the V&A", 2.30pm.
Tate Gallery: James Malpas, "Lunatics Run the Asylum", 1pm.
National Portrait Gallery: David King, "Sir Arthur Conan Doyle", 1.10pm.
Camden Arts Centre, London NW3: Ori Gersht, "Conversations about Science and Imagination", 6.30pm.

Edna Lumb Artistic Trust

The annual Edna Lumb Travel Prize for art students, sponsored by the Edna Lumb Artistic Trust, was presented yesterday at Leeds Metropolitan University. Awards were made to Huw Arthur, Katie Rodman and John Byrne.

LAW REPORT: 30 APRIL 1998

Judge may postpone confiscation proceedings

Regina v Cole; Court of Appeal (Criminal Division) (Lord Justice Judge, Mr Justice Mitchell and the Recorder of Birmingham) **22 April 1998**

CONFISCATION proceedings under the Drug Trafficking Act 1994 may only be postponed beyond the six-month period from the date of conviction laid down by section 3 of the Act by the judge in open court and in exceptional circumstances, but they may be postponed by the listing officer within the statutory period.

The Court of Appeal refused the application of Andrew Stanley Cole for leave to appeal against a confiscation order in the sum of £12,000 imposed on 15 May 1997 under the Drug Trafficking Act 1994.

The applicant had been convicted in July 1996 of conspiring to import drugs, and had been sentenced to a total of 12 years' imprisonment. The judge had then adjourned proceedings under the Drug Trafficking Act 1994 pursuant to section 3 of the Act for further infomation to be obtained, indicating that he would make the necessary determination in November 1996. He was taken ill in September, and the list office adjourned the hearing to December, and then again to January 1997.

On 2 January 1997, within six months of the date of the applicant's conviction, the judge was well enough to sit. He decided that the hearing should be postponed on the basis that his illness had provided an exceptional cirumstance which permitted its extension.

When the matter finally came on for hearing on 15 May, it was submitted on behalf of the applicant that the judge's illness had not provided a sufficient basis for postponing the hearing, and, further, that the listing officer had not been entitled to adjourn the hearings in the judge's absence. The order postponing the hearing had thus been made without jurisdiction, and, since over six months had elapsed since the applicant's conviction, there was no jurisdiction to continue with the proceedings or make any order under the 1994 Act. The judge rejected that submission and made the confiscation order. The applicant applied for leave to appeal.

Leon da Costa (Registrar of Criminal Appeals) for the applicant; Graham Buchanan (Solicitor, Customs and Excise) for the Crown.

Lord Justice Judge said that counsel for the applicant recognised that the points he took were technical in the extreme and wholly lacking in merit. Nevertheless he had been right to emphasise that an order made by the court without jurisdiction could not be allowed to stand.

Section 3 of the 1994 Act provided that confiscation proceedings might be postponed for further information to be obtained, but that, save in exceptional circumstances, the total period of postponement should not exceed six months from the date of conviction.

The section created a convenient code which permitted the court to pass an appropriate sentence before having determined whether to make a confiscation order and simultaneously maintained the necessary control over the process, which could otherwise become protracted and ultimately unfair.

The statutory provisions were clear. The court should normally deal with a confiscation order within six months of the conviction. In exceptional circumstances that period might be exceeded. The judgment whether circumstances were exceptional or not had to be made by the court considering whether to make a confiscation order, and the decision had to be made before the six-month period had elapsed. It was a judicial decision, to be made in open court.

Subject to the statutory procedure in section 3 the ordinary administrative management of the court's business remained unaffected. It was not without significance that section 3 used the word "postponement", a term of art, rather than the very well understood word "adjournment". Had it been intended to interfere with the ordinary administration of court business in the way suggested on behalf of the applicant, the legislation would have been differently and far more clearly worded.

In the present case the judge had been in hospital on the date when he had indicated that he would determine the confiscation issue. The statutory code had not been intended or drafted so as to preclude the listing officer making sensible arrangments for the conduct of the court's business, normally after discussion with the trial judge if available, or the resident judge, provided that he did not purport to postpone the determination beyond the six-month period. An extension of that period was beyond his jurisdiction. Arranging a fresh date within the statutory period when the judge had already ordered a postponement was not.

The judge had made the order complained of within the statutory period in open court, and had been entitled to conclude that illness amounted to an exceptional circumstance.

Kate O'Hanlon, Barrister

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After the horror, the humbug

"JOURNALISM'S job is to shed light on life's darker side."

This is the justification offered by Peter Stothard, editor of *The Times*, for his decision to publish a serialisation of *Cries Unheard*, Gitta Sereny's book about the child murderer Mary Bell. Most journalists would support his grand mission statement, though it certainly isn't journalism's only job. The life of Mary Bell is certainly dark and her deeds horrible – but true public-interest justification would require its telling to give us new information, to help stop such crimes in the future. Simply staring at vileness is corrupting, not courageous.

Reading the first instalment one cannot escape the feeling that this exercise in illuminating the shadows reveals plenty of detail but no really new outlines or valuable evidence in a grim story that is familiar already. "Those to whom evil is done do evil in return." Cycles of childhood abuse and cruelty are repeated endlessly. The question is whether the new information changes our minds in any way important enough to justify the hurt it has caused the relatives of the victims and may yet cause Mary Bell herself.

For these purposes the extracts published yesterday are the only relevant ones. The later story of her manipulative habits in remand homes and prisons covers the time after she was convicted of the murder of two toddlers. They may tell us that the treatment of young killers was crass and made their lives worse; but anyone interested in penal issues knows that. Do we learn anything essential or new about Mary Bell's motives for killing? Not yet.

We are told, for example, that when Mary Bell was a baby she "accidentally" ate some pills. This happened on three occasions. Each time she was almost killed. It is possible that her mother had such pathological tendencies towards her daughter that she made her eat the overdose, deceiving her that the drugs were sweets. Of course this is shocking. But we cannot be sure that it was true. Even if it were, it might be unwise to make a connection between these events and Mary's later crimes (at what age did she come to realise that her own mother may have tried to poison her?). But, most importantly, as Gitta Sereny herself admits, most of these stories were first published in her earlier book, *The Case of Mary Bell*, as long ago as 1972.

But there is a another, more significant, set of revelations, described by *The Times* on its front page with the banner "My prostitute mother constantly abused me, says Mary Bell". The allegation is that Betty Bell subjected her daughter to sexual abuse by some of her clients. This occurred when Mary was perhaps five years old. This is also, of course, a harrowing story. Whilst we have no reason to doubt what Mary Bell said and we accept that she repeated the details in separate interview sessions, it still remains her side of the story. And Gitta Sereny mentions evidence that might cast doubt on that story. Even so there is no doubt that Mary Bell was, as her biographer says, a "horribly damaged child" by the time she came to commit her terrible crimes.

So that is the size of it. A child who was probably abused herself went on to murder other children. This is the banality that lies at the heart of such appalling evil. The details are unpleasant but are also liable to dispute and do not necessarily prove anything. This is especially true if we reflect on how rare these child murderers are – far rarer than, say, predatory paedophiles, although there are very few of them too. None of this is to argue that Gitta Sereny was wrong to write this book. She is a distinguished writer. She has long had an interest in this case. She did not just do it for the money, although the indirect result, a payment of any sum to Mary Bell, is distasteful. It runs against the spirit if not the letter of the code of practice of the Press Complaints Commission. The Home Secretary, Jack Straw, is right to see if the law can be changed to prevent this kind of profiting from crime.

Even if the work had been written by a less competent author and the financial arrangements had been more mercenary we could not suggest banning it. The biggest fault lies in the profile given to it thanks to the hype it has received in the media, and we find Mr Stothard's defence disingenuous. People talk about stories being "whipped up by the media" and this is a classic: a book bought to boost circulation (let's have no humbug about that) creates a media storm and leads to tabloid pursuit. Gitta Sereny and Mr Stothard cannot avoid their role in what now follows. We ask again, is it worth it?

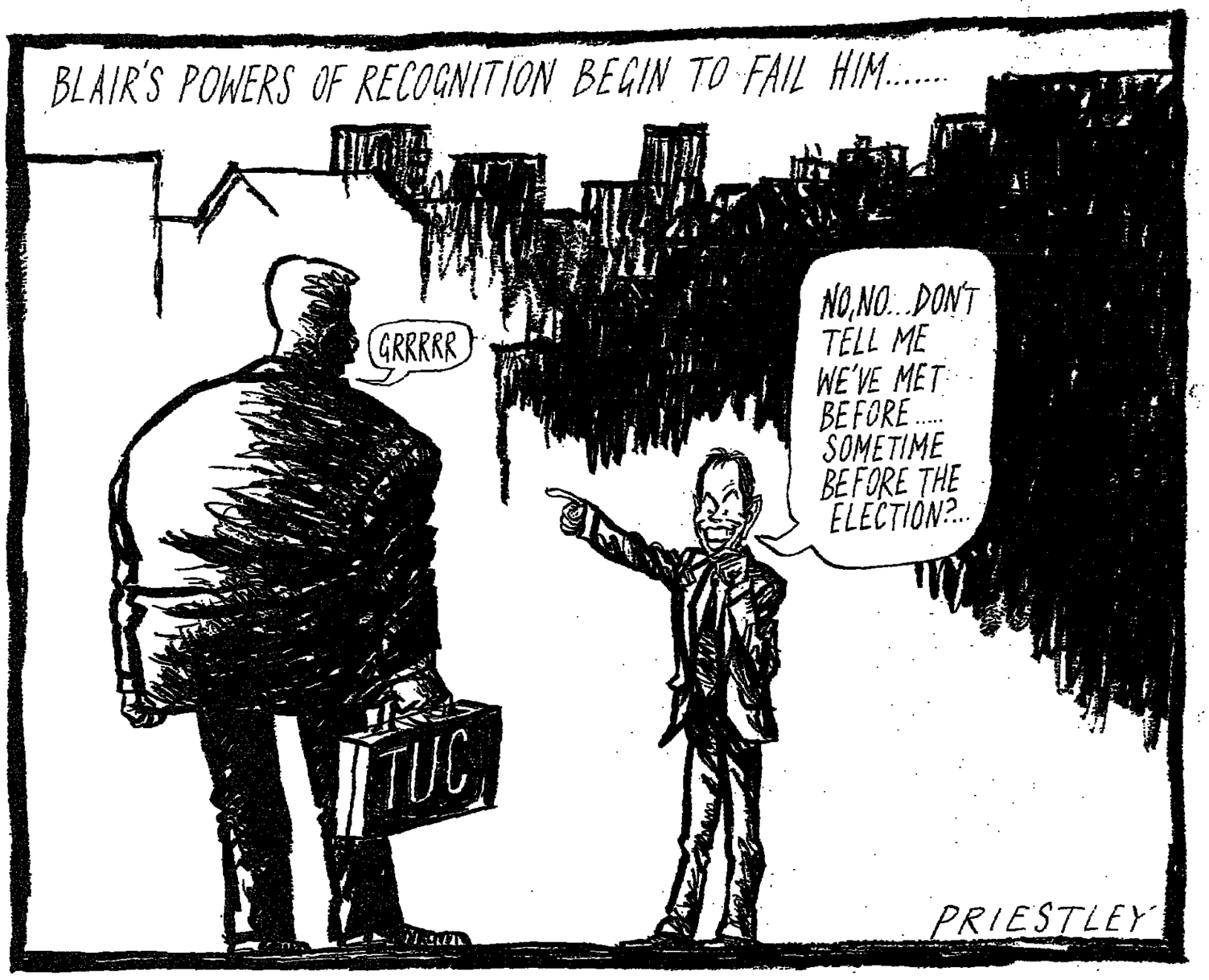
Again and again *The Times* assures us that "only by trying to understand what could conceivably have driven an 11-year-old girl to kill two small boys who trusted her can we come any closer to stopping these crimes ... It is the very sensitivity of the issue that makes the duty of the journalist plain".

So far we have learnt nothing from the book that would stop such crimes happening. We know abuse causes abuse. But even if we had, that doesn't make newspaper extraction a public good. We can only call in evidence this conversation between subject and author reported in *The Times*: " 'After all,' she smiled a little crookedly, 'once you get through with me, there won't be much left for anybody to ask, will there?' I tried to disabuse her of this optimism. Newspapers, I told her, are a very different medium from a book, with a different readership and reporters would always find questions to ask."

Too right. The wave of public revulsion about "blood money" and the rest has, in this post-Bulger world, had the predictable effect – *The Sun* has found where Mary Bell lives and a lynch mob will shortly be on its way.

Thus a book bought to boost sales will provide the excuse for further media ruthlessness. The newspaper that publishes her new name and address will be breaking the law. It will be punished severely by the authorities. But it will also be handsomely rewarded in extra sales and profits. Ms Bell may well have been able to make off with a few thousand pounds (the sum is disputed) for her trouble, but she may well soon know how Sidney Cooke feels. Of course she was a little naive. But with all this hurt being revisited on all those involved in the case – now including Mary Bell's own daughter, aged 12 – we wonder whether the very marginal improvement of our understanding of an extremely rare kind of crime is really justified.

In an apologia yesterday Mr Stothard spent almost as much time attacking the editor of the *Daily Telegraph*, Charles Moore, as he did defending his own actions. This was telling. He accused Mr Moore of losing his nerve when the *Telegraph* was offered first refusal on the serialisation and turned it down. But Mr Moore was right not to get involved. Mr Stothard's newspaper has indulged in humbug. He has served no great public interest and has added to private grief. It is enough for journalists to leave some dark corners dark.



LETTERS

Post letters to Letters to the Editor *and include a daytime telephone number Fax 0171 293 2056; e-mail: letters@independent.co.uk E-mail correspondents are asked to give a postal address. Letters may be edited for length and clarity.*

'Paedophile art'

MARGARET KENNEDY'S intemperate attack on Eric Gill's Stations of the Cross in Westminster Cathedral (Comment, 29 April) evidently issues from great personal suffering, but the logic of her argument would strip the walls of every great church in Christendom. If it were indeed true that "art cannot serve spiritual needs when it has been created in sin," there would be no religious art whatever. A retrospective purge of all religious art produced by adulterers and seducers, wife-beaters and exploiters of the poor would result in a bonfire of the vanities which would make Savonorola look like the chairman of the Arts Council.

We may cherish the ideal of the devout monk painter producing his work in prayer and meditation, but in fact only one Western artist has ever been beatified, and many of our greatest religious artists have been spectacularly unholy human beings. Gesualdo was a murderer. Byrd exploited his position as an Elizabethan court favourite for financial gain, while his fellow Catholics were tortured and executed in the name of the queen he served. Yet both men wrote sublime religious music, and ironically, Byrd's most haunting works are lamentations for the persecution of God's people.

Fortunately, great art transcends the limitations of the human beings who make it. Gill's magnificent and moving carvings are indeed the work of a paedophile, but that does not make them "paedophile art". That so flawed a human being could produce so pure a celebration of the story of redemption is part of the mystery of grace, which can draw glory even from "the foul rag and bone shop of the heart".

EAMON DUFFY
Reader in Church History in the University of Cambridge
Magdalene College, Cambridge

LET him among you that is without sin, cast down the first Station.

IAN HURDLEY
Bury, Lancashire

YOUR editorial on paedophiles (27 April) was as irresponsible as it was inaccurate. Your suggestion that the Government has been slow to act in this area is baffling. Only weeks after last May's election we implemented the Sex Offenders Act establishing a register of sex offenders and ensured that the police were told of any change of name and address.

Also, in the Crime and Disorder Bill now passing through Parliament we are extending the supervision in the community of those released from prison and creating a new Sex Offender Order to restrain the activity of known paedophiles. This new order will enable the police to control the movements of dangerous men such as Robert Oliver and Sidney Cooke who, because of a legal loophole which exists for those sentenced before 1992, have been released from prison without this sort of oversight.

We are also urgently exploring the possibility of new indeterminate sentences to ensure that serious sex offenders are not released from prison until it is safe to do so. You glibly suggest that this can be achieved without careful consideration. But if it is to be effective we need to get it right.

We share the genuine concern of those who feel angry at the inadequacy of present arrangements to deal with people like Cooke and Oliver. But pandering to vigilantism and law-breaking, as your editorial did, can only succeed in driving paedophiles underground making it more difficult for the police and others to tackle the problem.

ALUN MICHAEL
Minister of State
Home Office

RARELY have I been so shocked by an editorial as by yours on the question of what to do with "dangerous paedophiles" (27 April). You seem to confuse paedophiles with convicted child-murderers. They are not interchangeable categories. Convicted child-murderers ought, quite obviously, to be kept isolated, presumably in hospitals rather than prisons.

You glibly call for philosophical objections to imprisoning potentially dangerous individuals to be "swept aside". You are calling for people to be jailed not for what they do, but what they are. We need to remember Pastor Niemoller's often-quoted remarks: first the state imprisons those none of whose characteristics one shares, but it finally ends up imprisoning all and sundry at its sole whim. In the 1930s, it was the Jews and the Gypsies, then the Communists, then all democrats in general. Shall we, in the 1990s, begin with the paedophiles?

JEFFRY KAPLOW
London SE3

Disruptive pupils

MARGARET HODGE proposes penalties for schools that exclude children for disruptive and unruly behaviour ("Blair's plan to rescue the lost generation of boys", 27 April).

I am a governor of a comprehensive school with a catchment area which includes substantial areas of high social deprivation. Over half the pupils on entry are below the average in academic attainment. Sixty per cent of the entry this school year had a reading age of 9.5 or less. A few pupils are permanently excluded each year from this school but in return it does accept some who have been excluded from other schools and who may respond to a fresh start.

Does Margaret Hodge understand the real difficulties that a few disruptive and disturbed pupils create, day after day? The record for one 15-year-old boy lists 85 separate incidents during the first two terms of this school year, including persistent lateness, truanting, rudeness, swearing, and disruption of classes. At the end of the second term he was excluded for 10 days after physically assaulting a teacher and warned that he was in danger of permanent exclusion. During the first week after readmission, despite having accepted a contract setting out what was expected of him, he resumed his disruptive behaviour.

The time taken by staff in dealing with pupils such as this means there is less time for them to spend on the majority of pupils, who do not deserve to have their teaching disrupted. These very difficult pupils need professional help, but it is quite unreasonable to expect this to be provided by mainstream schools.

ANGELA CRUM EWING
Reading, Berkshire

Goya and the restorers

IT IS very disturbing that part of Goya's testimony against picture restorations should have migrated from the Spanish royal archives to a Sotheby's sale in London ("Auction of Goya letter highlights mystery of Spain's royal treasures", 25 April).

Professor Nigel Glendinning has performed invaluable service in drawing attention to Goya's protest that "Time destroys only one painting per century whereas restorers destroy a hundred." His suggestion, however, that Goya was motivated by a desire to keep restoration work within his own gift seems unjust.

In a letter – hopefully, still to be found in the archives – of 2 Jan 1801, Goya argued against *all* attempts to "restore" paintings to their supposed original conditions: "The more one retouches paintings on the pretext of preserving them the more they are destroyed, and that even the original artists, if they were alive, now could not retouch them perfectly because of the aged tone given the colours by time, who is also a painter according to the maxim and observation of the learned."

MICHAEL DALEY
Artwatch UK
East Barnet, Hertfordshire

Worsthorne's nation

PEREGRINE WORSTHORNE'S conversion to a multi-racial Britain (Comment, 28 April) is both impressive and mildly comic.

It hasn't occurred to him that asking the pupils in the Hampstead comprehensive he visited "what nationality they believed themselves to be" would cause a stir, not because the question is fudged in history lessons, but because it would be as ridiculous as if asked of himself.

Nationalism only needs to be inculcated in societies which are insecure about it, such as, apparently, the United States. Surely not in Hampstead. Tell us, Sir Peregrine, what nationality do you believe yourself to be a member of? The only proper answer is, "Why do you ask?"

PAUL POTTS
Yeovil, Somerset

Lying CVs

I WAS appalled by Helen Jones's encouragement to lie on CVs ("Time to clean up your CV", 23 April). Recently I have talked to employers in the Teesside area for a survey. Many said they would short-list ten to fifteen apparently excellent respondents to job advertisements, only to find out during interviews that a substantial number failed to live up to the promise of their CVs. Needless to say, these people did not get offers.

I would always advise employers to check a sample of claims on CVs, and to seriously consider dismissing anyone recruited on the basis of what were later proved to be false pretences.

IAN D PEARCE
Great Ayton, North Yorkshire

Parking and shopping

YOU REFER (report, 29 April) to the "plague" of parking space in London. How are Londoners supposed to buy things? Not in out-of-town supermarkets, which have been declared ideologically unsound; nor in town either, it now appears. Have any of the Prescott tendency ever tried lugging a week's food shopping or a flat-pack wardrobe home on a bus?

VYV HOPE-SCOTT
Twickenham, Middlesex

Biting topical satire from the grand new Dukes of York

MILES KINGTON

WHEN WE are children, we learn children's rhymes, make them up and chant them, and when we grow up we forget all about them. But the children who are our children go on learning them and chanting them and making up new ones, out of our hearing, and I have recently spent some time creeping around school playgrounds, and talking to children, to find out what today's rhymes are like.

The surprise is that many of them are very topical. Well, I suppose this isn't too surprising, because rhymes about the Grand Old Duke of York and Jack Horner were topical once, but I wasn't expecting to come across so many up-to-date ones. Take this for example:—

Oh, I am a gnome,
And I live in a Dome.
And my name is Peter Mandelson.
And you can come
And visit my Dome
If it's ready by 2001...!

Mandelson crops up in quite a few rhymes I have come across, for instance:—

Peter, Peter Mandelson
Had an early bed for the Millennium
Didn't wake up till a quarter past one
Poor old Peter Mandelson.

Here is a skipping rhyme, from London:—

One graffiti, two graffiti,
Four graffiti, eight:
Do some more graffiti
And end up in the Tate.

Not all of these new rhymes are about politicians. Take this one, for example,

People's princess,
Where have you been?
Now you're on a packet
Of margarine!

And this one:—

Branson went by Virgin Air
Didn't get him anywhere.
Branson went by Virgin Train
But the train was late again.
Branson had a big balloon
But the balloon took off too soon
Now he wants to be lottery toff –
Come on Branson! Knock it off!

Here are another two short ones selected at random from many:—

Hello Hello Magazine!
Come and view my wedding scene!
Come and snap my nuptual fun –
Watch me take the money and run!

And this one, which must be of quite recent origin:—

"I will be the world's best mayor!"
said little Jeffrey-Head-In-Air.
"Oh, but how can we be sure?
You've never told the truth before!"

Love and marriage have always been treated sceptically in children's rhymes, and this new one is no exception:—

Gaynor, Gaynor,
Bought new trainers
And off like lightning she took
There came a little man
So she ran and ran and ran –
But now she's Mrs Cook.

Death, too, is fair game to children:—

I went to the doctor,
Showed him my bruise
He said, You'll have to
Join the queues.
I joined a queue
And started to sneeze
Because people in queues
Spread disease.
And when I arrived
At the head of the queue
The doctor said,
No, I can't cure you.
You've got HIV
You've got CJD
You've got NSU
And I think you've got ME.
So don't go to a doctor
With letters after his name
You'll catch all the letters
And die just the same.

More tomorrow, I hope. Here's a taster:—

My name is Mo Al Fayed,
I'm open to all suggestions.
I've got a big Giro in Cairo
And I pay cash for questions!

هكذا من الأصل

The euro has finally arrived, but who's to be in charge of it?

RUPERT CORNWELL

A CHOICE OF BANKERS

THIS, then, is it. No more ifs, buts and maybes, but pure, unadulterated history. The 15 leaders of the European Union gather in Luxembourg this weekend to name the founder members of the euro, and the exchange rates at which they will lock their currencies together, supposedly for ever. Nothing since the very foundation of the European Community in 1957 can match it. Alas, there is one small snag: a struggle between France and Germany, played out through the prism of the new European Central Bank, for the future economic management of Europe. And right now, the French look the likely winners.

First, a recap for readers who haven't closely followed the plot. The ECB will be the most powerful supra-national institution in Europe, and it was long taken for granted that its first president – and thus the EU's most powerful official – would be Wim Duisenberg, former governor of the Dutch central bank and championed by Germany, the biggest economic power of the EU, as a guarantee that the currency managed by the future central bank will be as good as the D-Mark. But last autumn the French threw a spanner into the works by nominating their own candidate, Jean-Claude Trichet, the governor of the Bank of France. Despite the good offices of Tony Blair, who chairs the summit, the dispute as of last night was unresolved.

Now, like any Euro-dispute worth its salt, this one plays on several levels. We may enjoy the political arm-wrestling between two enfeebled politicians – in this case a deeply unpopular German chancellor who must defend German interests to the hilt if he is to retain power at next September's elections, and a French president who threw away much of his power last May by calling unnecessary Parliamentary elections and losing them. At another level, it is another chapter in a long feud between the Dutch and the French over matters European. Most deeply however, the contest for the bank presidency is metaphor for an almost philosophical argument, pitting Gallic interventionism against the German belief that bankers know best.

In one sense, the identity of the ECB president is irrelevant. Judged by his track record, Mr Trichet can crack the financial whip with the best of them. True, Mr Duisenberg successfully ran the Dutch central bank for 15 years; but given Holland's place in the German economic orbit, that was little more than operating a branch office of the Bundesbank. The Bank of France however is a different matter, and Mr Trichet has done as much as anyone to endow his country with the lowest inflation rate (not to mention the third highest jobless rate) in the EU. Given that France is in a minority of one, Mr Trichet is unlikely to prevail. His best bet is probably an informal deal to split the eight-year term with Mr Duisenberg. Conceivably a third, compromise, candidate will emerge. Whatever happens though is unlikely to make much difference to the way the ECB is run. Central bankers are central bankers. Maybe the dispute will be settled this weekend, but failure to do so would be no disaster. Indeed, what better climax to Britain's six months in the European Presidency than a deal at the June EU summit – an *accord de Cardiff* – struck on good old British soil, setting in place the Euro's first high command. For a country that is shunning the single currency until at least 2002, that's as close to being "at the heart of Europe" as Mr Blair's going to get.

The real struggle for the heart of Europe is between France and Germany. And the ostensible loser looks set to win the war – for the simple reason that monetary union is far too important to be left to bankers alone. Not only is the enterprise itself utterly political, which indeed only makes sense as a precursor of political union; above all, the decisions of the ECB will have a crucial bearing on the supremely political issues of growth and employment. Quite reasonably, the French say the bank must be answerable to some form of political authority, and insist that participants in the Euro must harmonise their economic policy, if monetary union is to work properly. And one way or another, they will have their wish.

At the insistence of the Germans, the ECB has been modelled on the Bundesbank. Like the Bundesbank, its defining task is to "maintain price stability", with no mention of fostering growth. But the huge power and prestige of the Bundesbank reflect the peculiarity of a Germany hobbled by its history, whose national pride lies not in military or cultural achievement – but in a currency that has only existed 50 years. So, unchallenged and virtually unscrutinized, the Bundesbank reigns. Now that may be fine for Germany (though a record jobless rate of 12 per cent makes one wonder, for how much longer). But for Europe ?

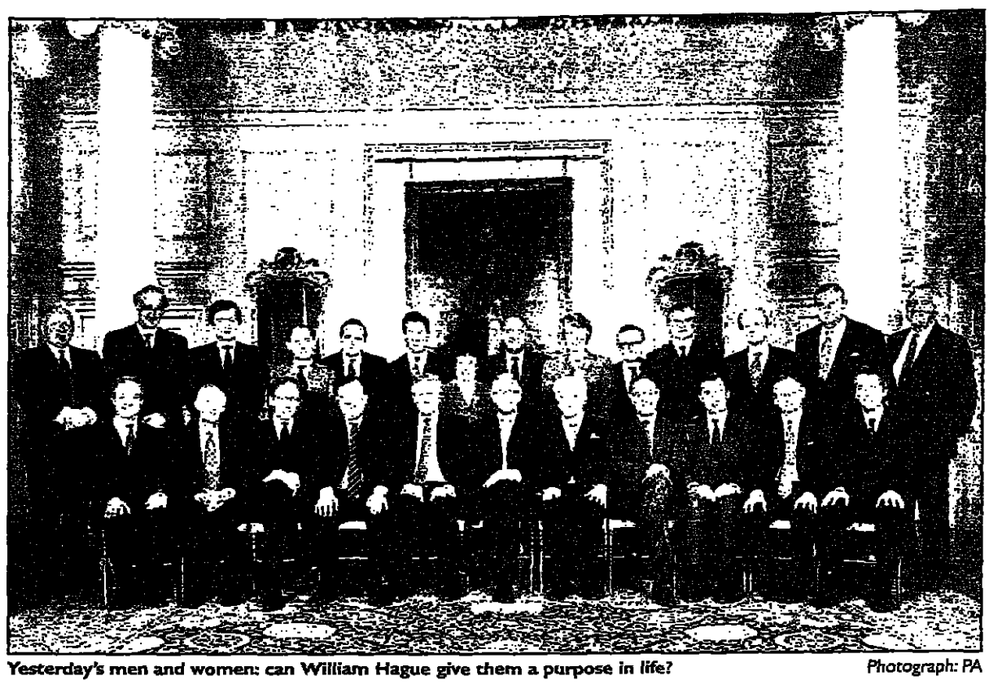
I would wager two things. First, that the European parliament sooner or later wins the power to monitor the ECB, as Congress monitors the Federal Reserve. Secondly, I am sure that "Euro-X" – the informal club of single currency participants from which Britain to its chagrin is excluded – will develop into some form of political oversight for the ECB. Indeed, this is just the sort of *quid pro quo* France will demand for a withdrawal of the candidacy of Mr Trichet. By such dealings does Europe advance.

But does this matter for us ? Of course it does. For the moment we "pre-ins" sit on the sidelines, miffed by our exclusion from "Euro-X", but consoling ourselves by adding the row over the presidency to all the economic arguments why the single currency is bound to come apart at the seams. But once again Britain is in danger of underestimating Europe's political will that, by hook, crook – or more probably fudge – monetary union be made to work. So, come 2002 or 2003, we will join, forced as in 1973 to accept rules of a club that others have set. History will be made this weekend. The tragedy is that Britain could have been making it too.

Where have all the Tories gone – they've left the scene one by one

ANNE McELVOY

ON HAGUE'S BIG PROBLEM



Yesterday's men and women: can William Hague give them a purpose in life? Photograph: PA

ON A walking holiday in the Dales, a friend noticed that William Hague was due to speak locally. He wandered in and listened to the youthful bald one rallying the despondent troops of North Yorkshire. At the end of the meeting, Mr Hague headed straight for him and said jovially, "Hello, what are you doing here then? You don't look like a Tory." I ought to explain that my friend bears no resemblance to Swampy. Body-piercing is not his thing. He shaves. He wears neat clothes. He is downright fastidious about his haircut.

Yet Mr Hague spotted him from fifty paces as too much of a normal bloke to be a Tory. The really bad omen for Mr Hague is that we know instinctively what he meant by this comment. It recognises that there is a limited type of person who is likely to be an active Conservative – we can all make up the categories, old ladies in tweeds and high dudgeon, prematurely old young men who smoke cigars and marry into the neighbouring dynasty, matrons singing "Rule Britannia" at the slightest provocation.

When the Labour Party was this prone to caricature – whippets, cloth caps and composite motions – it was in deep trouble. A successful political party should have in its ranks a representative spread of human types. Even under Margaret Thatcher, the most ideological of Tory leaders, the party at large was heterodox. That valuable mantle is now passing to Labour. Once a party becomes identifiable as a rarefied tribe, it is a lost cause.

Yet normal Tories are disappearing steadily from active service. The last few weeks have seen a falling away from the Tory front-line. Stephen Dorrell is giving up, having failed to say a single thing about education anyone (including perhaps Mr Dorrell) can remember. Gillian Shepherd, capable and approachable, is considering going the same way. And with what will Mr Hague repair the hole in his bucket? With Tim Yeo and Ann Widdecombe. The really sad thing is that the party, for want of other options on its depleted benches, has to present this is an exciting renewal. Yet Miss Widdecombe and Mr Yeo are ghosts of John Major's front bench, haunting Mr Hague's future.

The shadow front bench conveys the collective impression of wishing it had a different day job. As shadow to Robin Cook, Michael Howard manages to be sound both mean and ineffectual. Peter Lilley's tendency to attach too much importance to detail is magnified in opposition, with the result that his attacks on Gordon Brown are unfocused. The only consistently impressive performer is Iain Duncan Smith – but his main interest is the economic impact of monetary union, not his Social Security brief. Mr Lilley on the other hand adores the intricacies benefit reform. The simplest solution would be for him to swap portfolios with Mr Duncan Smith.

Meanwhile, New Labour is erecting a big political tent – and one quite roomy enough to accommodate a lot of mainstream Tories. Chris Patten has been appointed to chair the enquiry into the future of the RUC. In this role he will shore up the peace process and, by extension, Mr Blair's authority. Yet Tories – other than the fervent Unionists who believed that Mr Patten was insufficiently zealous in their cause when he was Northern Ireland Secretary – can ill complain about the appointment, since they started the peace process in the first place and because they formally support it now.

Mr Patten (who, for the record, is a director of this newspaper) has been hotly targeted by Mr Blair as someone he would like to have as a friend. This is not only because both men share a pragmatic, unhysterical view of how politics should be conducted. It is key to New Labour's ambition to be seen as the party that manages the country's affairs efficiently and doesn't let ideology get in the way.

> There is a limited type of person who is likely to be an active Conservative

To secure this goal, it needs to be on good terms with the sort of Tories, like Mr Patten, whom the public regards as sane and normal. By the same reasoning, Michael Heseltine has been kept on board as a key figure in the development of the Millennium Dome.

The last year has seen that clear, blue water evaporate. The Conservative party used to be staunchly anti-devolution – now it has accepted that the United Kingdom is not necessarily doomed by the advent of a Scottish Parliament and a Welsh Assembly. It has come to support a mayor for London. Very soon, it will have to address itself to the end of voting rights for hereditary peers

These are necessary accommodations to the change wrought by the 1997 landslide. But Mr Hague has not yet found a way to resist the impression that he is giving both people and ground to New Labour's sphere of influence without any compensatory gain.

A year after the election defeat, there is only one issue on which the Tories have started repairing their image and, contrary to expectation, that is Europe . His "No EMU entry for ten years" commitment, looks more and more reasonable in the light of Mr Blair's personal hesitation and the Treasury Select Committee's report recommending that the Government wait at least five years after the single currency's launch in 1999 to decide whether it is in Britain's economic interests.

The Conservative Party has sickened itself fighting about Europe. With the exception of a few suicide bombers, it desperately wants a peace process. Europe is also the one area in which Mr Blair overplayed his hand when, in the wake of a January letter to *The Independent* signed by Lord Howe, Mr Heseltine and Mr Patten in support of early British entry, he proposed a cross-party body to further the single currency. At this point, Mr Patten and Mr Heseltine distanced themselves from the idea, which came too close for comfort to a betrayal of party loyalty. Any such coalition should have been started far lower down the Westminster food-chain and allowed to spread organically.

So a fresh split of the pro/anti EMU Tories failed to materialize. This is probably the first nice thing to happen to Mr Hague since he was elected leader. If he wants to extend this warm glow, he should prepare to ballot his entirely membership on his policy at the earliest possible opportunity. The ten year moratorium is stringent enough to keep mainstream EMU-sceptics happy. At the same time, it jettisons the diehard, theological approach to Euroscepticism that marginalised the party in the public's eyes.

Only when he has won his case – however bitter the battle – will Mr Hague have the authority to rebuild a Conservative Party capable of appealing to the kind of people who don't all look like Tories. Voters, in other words.

Today's discoveries, yesterday's jobs...

JOHN WALSH

INVENTION and redundancy are the themes of the week. Every news bulletin has announced some new breakthrough that will benefit mankind. On Monday we read about an anti-bacterial gloop you paint on your teeth, to prevent decay for evermore. Then came news of the Viagra anti-impotence pill that's the hottest prescription item in the United States, and is getting endorsements from newly-priapic 70-year-olds. On Tuesday, *Nature* magazine introduced the gene that predisposes people to lung cancer (and, by extension, a whole family of associated cancer genes which can be isolated and dealt with in the next 30 years). By Tuesday evening, we heard about how grass releases noxious pollutants like ethanol into the atmosphere and cut grass makes it all a hundred times worse, so the best thing environmentally-minded suburbanites can do is never mow their lawn again.

As you consider these stories, it springs to mind that each innovation will theoretically put whole professions, or semi-professions, out of business. Imagine how the £150-an-hour dentists of Britain felt on Monday morning, on learning of the Death of the Filling. (What will they make fortunes out of now? Gold crowns? Scaling-and-polishing? Braces?). Imagine the twinge, somewhere between elation and depression, that assailed cancer specialists on hearing that their labours might be at an end in 25 years' time. Consider the panic meetings of executives from Flymo and Qualcast as they wonder if it's too late to go into a less doomed trade (drugs? windsurfers?). Imagine the features departments of *Penthouse* and *Rustler* and the other one-hander magazines (as I believe they're called) as they wrestle with the conundrum: if the readers can now get erections on bloody *prescription*, what are we paying all these expensively unclad young women for? (And what else do we put in the magazine?).

Unexpected redundancies have broken out in unexpected places. Wine snobs who say "I'll just open the Hirondelle to let it breathe," learned that wine does nothing of the sort; and since they generally have nothing else to contribute to oenological learning, they're effectively reduced to silence. The radio carried stories about rival soup kitchens which have become superfluous to the requirements of London's down-and-outs (who are fed up being woken by the sound of vans revving up at 2 am. My dear, the *noise*. And the *soup*). How galling to think yourself a warm, caring and kindly sort of person anxious to help the less fortunate, only to find the market's flooded with people like that and you might as well go back to grinding the faces of the poor. One imagines the streets of London soon filling up with retired dentists and lawnmower executives, grumbling former do-gooders and sex consultants as it once thronged with former dirigible pilots, bustle designers, purveyors of sealing wax and ("Where did I go wrong?") gaiter salesmen.

COLLEEN McCullough, the best-selling Australian novelist, breezed into town this week to sign copies of *The Song of Troy*, her re-telling of Homer's *Iliad*.

She held court in the living room of Lord Weidenfeld's gorgeous Thames-side pad. Lying on her publisher's sofa, she bitched about the Sydney literary scene and rhapsodised about her home, a thousand miles from the Oz mainland. It's Norfolk Island, a tiny dependent territory of Australia, five miles by three, with a population of British-Polynesian islanders who will never leave it. She spoke of its perfect climate, its slightly excessive political structure ("It's the most overgovened place in the world – I mean, nine MPs for 1,600 people?") and how everybody hates the Canberra bureaucrats who are trying to get their hands on the island's oil. Ms McCullough's husband, it turns out, is an islander called Ric Robinson, who's Minister for Trees, Resources, Environment and Garbage. He's descended from the originals, she said, the ones who were shipped there from Pitcairn Island in the 1850s after the Bounty mutiny. Many stayed, but some gradually found their way back to Pitcairn, where they remain. Naturally one asks about the family connection. Of course, she replies. Well, well. How extraordinary to discover that the author of *The Thorn Birds* is married to a great-great-great-great-great-grandson of Fletcher Christian.

> 'I wonder if your readers know that dusting is made much easier if you use a piece of flannel which has been soaked in paraffin for several hours'

I PROWLED around a junk fair at the weekend and came upon a stack of elderly magazines dating from the stunned and rationed years just after the second world war: *John Bull*, *Everybody's Weekly*, *Picture Post*, *Sunday Circle*. I bore them home in triumph and devoured them, as I once used to devour a pile of *Valiant* comics in the summer holidays. Turn the pages of *Cavalcade's* issue for the week ending 19 February 1949, and a lost world rises up before you, a world puzzlingly full of advertisements for groin-strain appliances ("Ruptured – But Fit For Anything") and cautiously-worded female complaints about "nerves" ("When nerves play their queer frightening tricks on you – then is the time for a course of bracing Wincarnis"), a world where the showbiz pages are full of Dorothy Squires and Billy Reid and the film review is of Jane Russell's bosomy flick *The Paleface*; an innocent time where the Woman's Page carries the urgent headline "Did You Know About This Tea?" and the Problem Page worries about the shocking table manners of Pamela (aged two-and-a-half) and passes on household tips ("I wonder if your readers know that dusting is made much easier if you use a piece of flannel which has been soaked in paraffin for several hours..."). The foreign pages express concern about Mr Stalin's Cold War peace offer, and readers write in about Topics of the Day like this: "Surely the absurd sign, 'Ladies cannot be served unless accompanied by a gentleman' should be erased from our public houses. It is not only an insult to British women, but gives the wrong impression to foreign tourists..."

Ah yes, it was a gentler time, more relaxed, less neurotic and without all the media folderol of the Nineties. But what is this, in the "Cat Out of the Bag" gossip section? A piece about a glamorous international celebrity (Rita Hayworth) and her jaunt around the world with a famous European playboy (Aly Khan). Guess what? "Reporters clung to the luckless couple wherever they touched down on their journey. A posse even pursued them in a 70mph night-time chase across Ireland... Aly several times swung off the road and switched out his headlights in order to throw the pursuing cavalcade of cars off the scent. But the reporters turned up in time to photograph the 3am breakfast at Aly's home."

Cavalcade clucks with disapproval about the way the papers promised to carry no further reports of the romance, but proceeded to do so almost immediately. A curious feeling of *deja vu* sweeps over one.

ONLY 19 DAYS TO GO

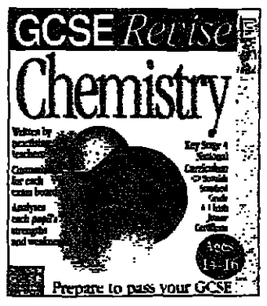
The first GCSE exams are only 19 days away

Is *your* child ready?

Q *Which of the following will turn universal indicator red?*

a) Milk of magnesia
b) Vinegar
c) Toothpaste

Answer in tomorrow's paper (yesterday's answer was b: Gall Bladder)



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Legal costs likely to stop DMG five from appealing

Peter Young: Fired over fund scandal

By Lea Paterson

THE FIVE former directors implicated in the Peter Young fund management scandal are unlikely to appeal against findings of regulatory investigations because they fear their legal funding could dry up.

Deutsche Morgan Grenfell (DMG) has, to date, been covering the legal costs of their five former members of staff – currently believed to be in the region of £250,000 per employee. However, the five are thought to fear that DMG could stop funding their cases if they appealed to an independent tribunal.

The five former DMG employees – Keith Percy, Graham Kane, Glynn Owen, Michael Wheately and Paul Ebling – were dismissed from the firm in October 1996 in the wake of the Peter Young affair. They are now under investigation by Imro, the City regulator, which is expected to publish its findings shortly

If they decide to contest Imro's findings in front of an independent tribunal and lose, the five could face costs of more than £500,000 each. The magnitude of the costs is believed to have deterred all five men from seeking to take their cases to appeal – with the possible exception of Keith Percy, who has substantial personal wealth.

Imro's handling of the investigation has attracted criticism from some City figures, who have called the regulator heavy-handed and have expressed concerns about the spiralling costs of the inquiry.

Imro has said it is crucial that breaching regulations is seen to carry serious repercussions, a view echoed by many in the City. The regulator has denied its procedure deters innocent parties from taking cases to appeal.

In September 1996, three Morgan Grenfell funds run by Peter Young were temporarily suspended when the firm suspected "serious irregularities". DMG bailed out investors and fired Mr Young. In October that year, the firm dismissed the five employees currently under Imro investigation.

In April last year, Morgan Grenfell was fined £2m and told to pay £1m in costs. At the time, industry observers said the Imro move drew a line under the affair for Deutsche.

Since their dismissal in October 1996, four of the five employees have not been employed directly in the financial services industry.

Keith Percy, at the time chief executive of Morgan Grenfell Asset Management, has recently been appointed as an adviser to Société Générale.

Imro issued its preliminary findings against the five around six months ago. The five – who have been allowed a substantial period of time to prepare their responses – are likely to hear Imro's decision in the coming weeks, around 18 months after news of the scandal broke.

Shareholders attack Rolls' sale to BMW

By Michael Harrison

VICKERS yesterday said it had not closed the door on a higher bid for Rolls-Royce Motor Cars from Volkswagen of Germany after coming under heavy shareholder attack for agreeing to sell the luxury car business to its arch rival BMW and returning £200m of the proceeds to investors.

VW said last night that the contract entered into by Vickers to sell Rolls to BMW for £340m "in no way altered its intention to make an increased offer to Vickers shareholders".

The increased VW offer, expected to value Rolls at £370m, is likely to be tabled in the next month. Shareholders will be asked to approve the sale of the company at an extraordinary meeting in early June.

Apart from an increased VW offer, there is also the possibility of a higher bid being submitted by a group of British Rolls-Royce enthusiasts who are trying to prevent the marque from being sold to a foreign buyer.

Defending the deal with BMW in the face of hostile questioning from shareholders at Vickers annual meeting in London's Docklands, Sir Colin Chandler, chairman, said: "We have a real deal with BMW, anything else is hypothetical. We have no other offer on the table. If one was made that we judged to be of sufficient interest we would examine it in the interests of shareholder value."

Later he said that Vickers had not closed the door on VW, although any new bid would have to be "credible".

Earlier, a succession of shareholders lined up to criticise the proposed sale to BMW. One shareholder said she was "devastated" by the deal while another said the board had no right to take bonuses for selling "the birthright of this country".

Shareholders were not placated by the promise of a £197m payout from the proceeds of the sale and several said that Vickers should be reinvesting more of the money in its existing defence and propulsion technology businesses.

Professor Douglas Longmore, a distinguished surgeon and chairman of the Rolls-Royce Acquisition Consortium, said funding was being put together by a group of wealthy Rolls-Royce owners. "I do not believe UK PLC can go on selling the family silver," he said.

Michael Shrimpton, the barrister originally behind the Acquisition Consortium, arrived at the meeting in a chauffeur driven Bentley Turbo and proceeded to tear into the deal with BMW. He said that the sale to BMW would damage the brand and, as evidence, pointed to what he claimed was the cheap BMW air conditioning in the new Silver Seraph model.

The VW offer will include a proposal to buy both the Cosworth engine business and Rolls body pressings plant, neither of which are included in the sale to BMW. The offer is expected to value the three businesses at more than £400m.

A VW spokesman also rejected Sir Colin's continued assertion that there was no other offer tabled. "For the record he may say there is no other bid on the table but he knows perfectly well that our offer is there subject to contract."

VW's financial advisers, Morgan Stanley, and its brokers, Panmure Gordon, are understood to have made contact with Vickers' advisers Lazards in the last 24 hours and are due to hold further discussions this week.

One option is for shareholders to be invited to vote on two competing bids when the extraordinary meeting takes place. But VW will prefer to get a recommendation from the Vickers board. Sir Colin said that if BMW were to be outbid there was nothing to stop it coming back with an improved offer.

In addition to the purchase price of £340m, BMW will also pay back around £20m in working capital that has been injected into Rolls since the start of the year.

BMW has promised to double production of the Rolls and Bentley marques to 6,000 a year and invest £1bn at the main Crewe manufacturing site. VW has offered to raise production to 10,000, invest up to £2bn and guarantee engines will continue to be built in the UK by acquiring Cosworth.

Outlook, page 23

Hot under the collar: Michael Shrimpton claimed BMW would damage the Rolls brand

Photograph: Neville Elder

The timetable of a deal

1997
Vickers puts Rolls-Royce Motor Cars up for sale.

1998
3 March - Unveils new Silver Seraph model, its first new model since 1980 and ninth Rolls model in all. BMW supplies engines for the Silver Seraph, as well as the new Bentley.

30 March - Vickers confirms BMW's £340m offer is the preferred bid and opens four weeks of exclusive negotiations.

31 March - German car maker Volkswagen is reported to have made improved offer for Rolls-Royce.

25 April - Volkswagen board approves increased £370m offer for Rolls-Royce

26 April - New Bentley Arnage unveiled at Le Mans

29 April - Vickers announces full agreement on sale of Rolls to BMW and says it has entered a contract to this end. The deal is conditional on a Vickers shareholder meeting pencilled in for early June.

Source: Reuters

'One in three' risk of slump this year

By Lea Paterson

THERE is a one in three chance that the UK economy will plunge into recession this year, according to a warning from one of the UK's leading research institutes.

The strength of the pound will be the key factor for the UK's economic prospects in the coming months, according the National Institute of Economic and Social Research.

Garry Young, of the NIESR, said: "The pound is the key thing really. Everything else [in the economy] is fairly well balanced".

In its report, the NIESR predicted: "The economy is currently on course for a soft landing provided that the pound declines from its current highs towards a more sustainable rate of DM2.60."

Yesterday, the pound closed virtually unchanged at just under DM3.0.

The NIESR said its central forecast for GDP growth in 1998 was 1.9 per cent. It has also cut its forecast for growth next year by 0.5 per cent to 1.6 per cent. The think-tank now believes there is a one in four chance that the economy will be in recession in 1999.

The NIESR's new forecasts are considerably more pessimistic than those released by the Treasury in last month's Budget. The Treasury predicted that GDP would grow by between 2 and 2.5 per cent this year and 1.75 to 2.25 per cent next year.

The NIESR report coincides with a spate of data suggesting the economy is slowing more sharply than many experts had predicted.

Yesterday, the Engineering Employers' Federation said that, based on the assumption that the pound's strength continues, output growth in the engineering sector would fall markedly to 0.5 per cent in 1998. Last year, output growth in the sector was 3.5 per cent.

The Nationwide said house price inflation continued to slow. Its seasonally adjusted house price index rose by 0.3 per cent in April, compared with 0.8 per cent last month.

Data from the Credit Card Research Group added to the weight of evidence pointing to a slowdown. Credit card spending increased by a year-on-year rate of 11 per cent, down from 17 per cent in February and 21 per cent in January. The research group said the decline was partially attributable to last year's base rate hikes.

Fund managers favour US banks

By Andrew Verity

BIG acquisitions by US investment banks have "Americanised" the UK equity market within the space of just 12 months, according to the leading annual survey of the sector.

In a "striking and dramatic finding", US-owned equity houses were voted top by 47 per cent of the finance directors polled in the 1998 Reuters Survey, against 24 per cent last year.

Fund managers also favoured US equity houses in 41 per cent of cases, against 15 per cent last year.

The authors of the survey, Tempest Consultants, said: "What is so striking is the combination of the magnitude the suddenness and the comprehensiveness of the changes." Tempest said the findings were an indictment of the big management consultancies which advised struggling equity houses.

Americanisation was reflected in the verdict of fund managers on analysts. NatWest Securities, now called BT Alex. Brown International and owned by Bankers Trust International, slipped from first to third place.

Fifteen per cent of fund managers voted Merrill Lynch best, putting the US investment bank second. SBC Warburg Dillon Read was favourite for analysts with 16 per cent.

Best fund manager was awarded to Fidelity, the US giant. Best individual fund manager went to a team at Mercury Asset Management.

Analysts' top 10

1 SBC Warburg Dillon Read
2 Merrill Lynch
3 NatWest Securities
4 HSBC
5 Dresdner Kleinwort Benson
6 CS First Boston
7 ABN AMRO
8 UBS
9 Schroders
10 Salomon Smith Barney

Source: Reuters

Reports damn SE's electronic trading

By Lea Paterson

THE CITY yesterday delivered a damning verdict on Sets, the controversial new electronic trading system introduced last October by the Stock Exchange.

Two separate surveys of leading City firms revealed that many fund managers have deep reservations about it.

The 1998 Reuters Survey of UK Larger Companies found that "37 of the largest fund management groups (£582bn of UK equities) are damning in their detailed criticism of the new order driven trading system".

In a separate development, the preliminary findings of Tradepoint/BesTrustees research suggested fund managers were concerned about key issues of block trading, anonymity and central counterparties – third parties that guarantee trades.

Reuters said 85 per cent of respondents found liquidity was worse under Sets, and that 90 per cent found the new system slower. Only 19 per cent said the price of bulk trades had improved. Price reductions were originally mooted as one of the key benefits of Sets.

Stephen Parker of Tempest Consultants, the company that published the Reuters Survey, said: "Fund mangers feel quite strongly about all this." Mr Parker dismissed suggestions that fund managers were simply reluctant to embrace change.

Nic Stuchfield, chief executive of Tradepoint, a rival to the London Stock Exchange, said: "Tradepoint's experience indicates that investors are getting a very rough deal in Sets. This has been resoundingly endorsed not only be the research we commissioned among UK fund managers but also by careful consideration of the London Stock Exchange's own consultative document."

According to Tradepoint, fund managers would like full anonymity throughout the trading cycle, not currently the case under Sets, as well as the introduction of a central counterparty to guarantee trades. Tradepoint said 85 per cent of respondents consider a central counterparty important or essential for order driven trading and 70 per cent said their ability to deal in size – block trading – has become worse since the introduction of Sets.

The findings come at a sensitive time for the Stock Exchange. The Exchange's consultative period on the new system ends today, and the results are expected in a month. A spokesman declined to comment on the responses to date. She said: "Our consultation exercise gives all market participants the opportunity to comment on Sets and shape the way going forward."

Market report, page 25

Exchanges debate millennium shutdown

By Clifford German

THE WORLD's leading stock markets are considering closing for business on the second trading day of the new millennium as part of efforts to ensure the crucial New Year changeover does not bring the financial markets to a grinding halt.

The markets are debating whether to open for business on Monday 3 January 2000 but close on the Tuesday to conduct a mini audit.

This would ensure that payments and settlement systems were working satisfactorily after the start of the new millennium. Experts fear computers which read the year by the last two digits will not be able to cope with the move from "99" to "00" and will crash, putting trillions of pounds of transactions at risk.

The proposal would be discussed at a millennium workshop in Brussels in June, the International Federation of Stock Exchanges said yesterday.

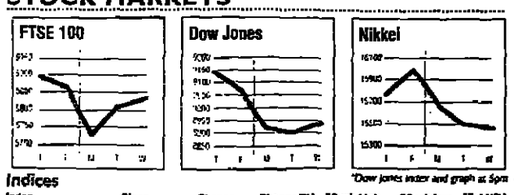
A number of markets, including the London Stock Exchange, had been planning to close for four days over the millennium weekend, starting on Friday, 31 December 1999 to allow IT staff to complete final tests of their systems to try to eliminate all obvious risks from the millennium bug. But opening on Monday to allow for a catch-up day on Tuesday has been put forward as a practical and prudent alternative.

Stock Exchange backroom staff are also expecting to come into work on Saturday 1 January to ensure that basic services, including water, electricity and telephones are actually working once the computers have switched from 99 to 00 dates.

Most national markets say that their individual systems are well advanced. The New York stock exchange claims its own house system has already been given the green light and the London market also claims to be well ahead in its preparations.

Yesterday's markets

STOCK MARKETS

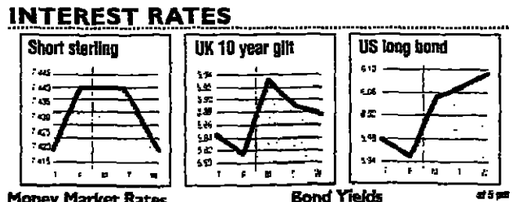


*Dow Jones index and graph at 5pm

Indices

Index	Close	Change	Change(%)	52 wk high	52 wk low	Yield(%)
FTSE 100	5833.10	26.50	0.46	6150.50	4382.80	3.46
FTSE 250	5568.90	1.00	0.02	5605.80	4384.20	2.92
FTSE 350	2917.80	10.40	0.37	2938.70	2141.80	3.36
FTSE All Share	2750.41	9.90	0.36	2861.12	2106.59	3.34
FTSE SmallCap	2533.60	5.30	0.20	2642.80	2182.10	2.99
FTSE Fledgling	1412.10	1.00	0.07	1417.30	1225.20	3.23
FTSE AIM	1074.40	4.00	0.37	1095.70	965.90	1.08
Dow Jones	8942.80	41.60	0.47	9213.33	6783.02	1.56
Nikkei	15385.43	-255.52	-1.63	20910.79	14488.21	0.98
Hang Seng	10471.15	-207.46	-1.94	16820.31	7699.13	3.85
Dax	5108.48	89.81	1.79	5442.00	3379.79	1.52

INTEREST RATES



Money Market Rates

Index	3 month	1 yr chg	1 year	1 yr chg
UK	7.50	0.94	7.44	0.38
US	5.72	-0.10	5.97	-0.47
Japan	0.62	0.04	0.65	-0.13
Germany	3.64	0.43	3.94	0.56

Bond Yields (at 5 pm)

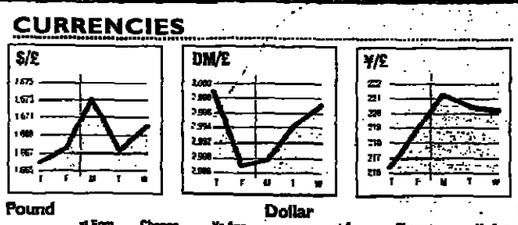
Index	10 year	1 yr chg	Long bond	1 yr chg
UK	5.68	-1.66	5.83	-1.86
US	5.82	...	6.09	...
Japan	1.74	-0.75	2.35	-0.87
Germany	5.04	-0.80	5.60	-1.01

MAIN PRICE CHANGES

Rises	Price (p)	Chg (p)	% Chge
Brit Petroleum	960.00	61.00	6.79
Express Dairies	161.00	8.00	5.23
Dalgety	386.50	18.50	5.00
Hillsdown Hlgds	178.00	8.00	4.71

Falls	Price (p)	Chg (p)	% Chge
TI Group	515.00	-37.00	-6.70
Tate & Lyle	488.00	-22.00	-4.31
Bradford Prop	303.00	-12.50	-3.96
Reckitt & Colman	1192.00	-49.00	-3.95

CURRENCIES



Pound

	at 5pm	Change	Yr Ago
Dollar	1.6700	+0.30c	1.6300
D-Mark	2.9970	+0.40pf	2.8128
Yen	220.60	+¥0.17	208.96
£ Index	106.20	+0.10	100.20

Dollar

	at 5pm	Change	Yr Ago
Sterling	0.5988	-0.11p	0.6135
D-Mark	1.7945	-0.07pf	1.7243
Yen	132.06	-¥0.14	126.85
$ Index	109.70	+0.20	106.40

OTHER INDICATORS

* at 5 pm	Close	Chg	Yr ago
Brent Oil ($)	13.98	-0.12	18.24
Gold ($)	310.05	1.80	339.50
Silver ($)	6.11	-0.03	4.66

	Index	Chg	Yr ago	Next fgs
GDP	114.60	2.80	111.48	Apr
RPI	160.80	3.50	155.36	Apr
Base Rates		7.25	6.00	

www.bloomberg.com/uk

source: Bloomberg

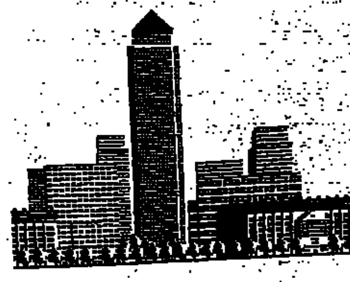
TOURIST RATES

Australia ($)	2.4874
Austria (schillings)	20.40
Belgium (francs)	60.02
Canada ($)	2.3397
Cyprus (pounds)	0.8490
Denmark (krone)	11.15
Finland (markka)	8.6790
France (francs)	9.7397
Germany (marks)	2.9164
Greece (drachma)	509.58
Hong Kong ($)	12.52
Ireland (punts)	1.1479
Indian (rupees)	60.86
Israel (shekels)	5.7666
Italy (lira)	2885
Japan (yen)	216.00
Malaysia (ringgits)	5.9843
Malta (lira)	0.6330
Mexican (nuevo peso)	12.82
Netherlands (guilders)	3.2663
New Zealand ($)	2.9058
Norway (krone)	12.16
Portugal (escudos)	295.49
Saudi Arabia (rials)	6.0712
Singapore ($)	2.5312
Spain (pesetas)	246.28
South Africa (rands)	8.1007
Sweden (krone)	12.64
Switzerland (francs)	2.4272
Thailand (baths)	58.17
Turkey (lirasi)	398776
USA ($)	1.6277

Rates for indication purposes only
Source: Thomas Cook

هكذا من الأجل

Stakes could go higher in the poker game for Rolls



OUTLOOK
ON THE CONTEST FOR VICKERS' PRIZE AND THE SCRAMBLE FOR THE TOP JOB AT THE EUROPEAN CENTRAL BANK

SIR COLIN Chandler looks like a heretic to the army of small shareholders in Vickers who, for understandable though largely sentimental reasons, do not want to see Rolls-Royce Motor Cars disappear into foreign ownership. Even the sweetener of a £200m distribution from the proceeds of the sale is seemingly not enough to persuade them of the merits of selling the Rolls and Bentley marques to the Germans.

But for other investors in Vickers, it looks like their chairman has played a reasonable game of poker with what has been an average hand. The sale of Rolls quickly came down to a two-way fight. Leaving aside the pantomime horse of the Rolls-Royce Acquisition Committee, it became evident quite early in the process that it would be a straight contest between BMW and Volkswagen. BMW has been in the driving seat since the beginning and not just because its chairman, Bernd Pichetsrieder, has a sentimental attachment to British motoring marques bordering on the unhealthy. BMW is also Rolls' engine supplier and, by some estimates, is responsible for 30 per cent of the new Silver Seraph.

It was therefore no surprise that BMW should have been selected as the preferred bidder for Rolls nor that Vickers should have signed a contract yesterday to accept its £340m offer.

Even after the hammer has come down, however. German hubris and rivalry refuses to recognise that the auction is over. Almost from the day Vickers entered exclusive negotiations with BMW, VW's Ferdinand Piech has let it be known that a superior offer is available, let's say at £370m. or perhaps £450m with the Cosworth engines business thrown in. This might simply have been a manoeuvre to persuade BMW to up the ante and overpay.

But, unless the VW board has been engaged in an extraordinary charade for the last four weeks, then it is certain that an enhanced offer will wing its way from Wolfsburg to Millbank Tower some time in the next fortnight. The services of Morgan Stanley do not come cheap and VW would have scarcely hired them as financial advisers, along with Panmure Gordon as brokers, unless it was serious in its intent.

Somewhere amid all the semantics of what constitutes a formal bid, the two sides cannot agree on what stage we are at. VW says its offer is on the table. Vickers says the opposite. Having kept the auction going this long, VW would look foolish not publicly to announce its bid and Sir Colin would look irresponsible not to consider it.

For all sorts of reasons, it would be easier to let BMW swallow Rolls. For one thing, the aero-engine maker Rolls-Royce PLC, which owns the marque and has been batting for BMW from the start, might cut up rough if another offer was accepted. But none of these is the concern of the Vickers board, which has its eyes set firmly on shareholder value. Sir Colin can handle the brickbats thrown by small investors at the annual meeting. But the big boys, led by Schroders with its 20 per cent stake, will not countenance any sweetheart deal that fails to secure the maximum amount of cash.

They could vote between two rival offers at the extraordinary meeting in June. But that would be messy, which means the board will have to come up with a recommended offer.

The trading picture for the rest of the Vickers group is not looking that healthy, which gives Sir Colin an added incentive to extract a better price out of the leverage VW provides. Anything less and Vickers could be looking for a new chairman to add to the new chief executive it has just recruited.

Curtain's up on the ECB show

THE SCRAMBLE for the top post at the future European Central Bank is taking on farcical proportions as we approach this weekend's key meeting of European leaders to launch the single currency. Technically, the issue needs to be settled before or at the meeting, but there is little sign of a compromise emerging. The French continue to insist on their own central banker, Jean Claude Trichet. The German backed compromise candidate, Wim Duisenberg, is meanwhile standing his ground.

So far, all attempts to broker a deal have failed. Borrowing an idea originally floated in Britain when New Labour was deciding on whether to renew Eddie George's contract as Governor of the Bank of England, the French have proposed that the eight-year term as head of the ECB be split – that Mr Duisenberg should get four years and then Mr Trichet would step into his shoes. However, this is not acceptable to the Germans, since it is against the rules and, as we all know, rules are there to be obeyed – especially when they are modelled as in this case on the Bundesbank's supposedly faultless model.

So then came the idea of the gentleman's agreement. Mr Duisenberg would be appointed for the full eight-year term, but would voluntarily retire after four years. It will be recalled that this was the solution floated for Eddie George too when he was reappointed at the Bank of England. It was said that the Chancellor was happy to have Eddie in the chair for a few more years, so as to provide continuity as the new Government bedded in, but he didn't want to have him for the full five-year term. If this was the arrangement, it was never admitted to. Maybe in a year or two, we'll find out.

In any case, the Germans, French and Dutch are all far too suspicious of one another to rely on an informal understanding of this type. The Germans are in any case utterly opposed to any kind of fudge. commendably in many respects. The eight year rule is there for a purpose – to ensure that the president is as independent of national and political interest as possible and that the interest rate policy pursued is therefore a credible one. The very spectacle of nations pushing their own candidates, presumably so as better to represent their interest, in itself undermines this concept. From changing the president once every four years, it is but a small step to changing him every other year and then annually. Eventually it become a question of buggins turn to set interest rates and the whole thing would fall apart.

Ironically, Mr Trichet is actually a central banker of unimpeachable quality and independence who is almost universally respected among his peers. He would make a fine and undeniably fair president of the ECB. But that's not the point. There's an issue of principle here.

The most likely outcome is that the French will eventually give way. However, the fact that they are not doing so without a fight, doesn't bode well for the future of the single currency. The biggest mistake may have been to set the term of office so long in the first place. Just because that is the way it is done at the Bundesbank doesn't mean it is the right way. It can be argued that an eight-year term encourages a degree of unaccountability and absolute power which is unhealthy and dangerous.

Other aspects of the Bundesbank model, also mirrored at the ECB, are open to question as well. The most obvious of these is the ECB's lack of transparency. Like the Bundesbank, the ECB is planning merely to announce changes in interest rates as if they are the unanimous decision of the entire board. If this survives to the ECB's inception, it going to prove rich territory of speculation and speculators. When there are 11 nations each pushing its own view of where interest rates need to be, the idea of a po faced ECB announcing a collective unanimous view simply won't be credible. The split on our own Monetary Policy Committee will look like a vicar's tea party by comparison.

Inspired deal: Ally and Scott Svenson, with Howard Behar (centre), president of Starbucks, the Seattle-based coffee chain that inspired the launch of the Seattle Coffee Company
Photograph: Philip Meech

Starbucks pays £49m for Seattle Coffee Co

By Nigel Cope
Associate City Editor

IT'S nice work if you can get it. Model your business on someone else's, develop it for a couple of years and then sell it back to the company that provided the inspiration for a cool £49m. This is the coup Ally and Scott Svenson pulled off yesterday when they sold the Seattle Coffee Company to Starbucks, the Seattle-based original which, they admit, formed the blueprint for their company.

No wonder Ms Svenson and her co-founder husband Scott were toasting their success with a few cappuccinos in one of their 56 coffee bars yesterday. "It is a kind of homecoming," they said. "Following our move to London in 1990 Ally and I missed Seattle and Starbucks so much that we eventually decided to recreate a Starbucks-like experience here," said Scott Svenson. "We grew up in Seattle and with Starbucks. It was our inspiration."

The all-shares deal nets a cool £14.7m for the Svensons, who own around 30 per cent of the shares in Seattle Coffee company. The deal comes just weeks before it was set to seek a flotation on the Alternative Investment Market that was expected to value the business at £75m.

Mr Svenson said that valuation had not been confirmed and that the management had been exploring a range of alternatives for the future of the business, including a float, a deal with another company, or staying private.

Seattle Coffee Company recorded losses of just over £1m on sales of £7m. The company says the underlying business is profitable but that it is investing heavily in new stores.

The American couple set up the chain with a single outlet in Covent Garden in 1995 after becoming exasperated that they could not find a "decent" cup of coffee in London. The first shop opened in a heatwave and in a building with no air conditioning. But despite the poor start, Ms Svenson said she was sure the concept would work "within 24 hours".

The deal with Starbucks will have a significant impact on Britain's burgeoning market for stylish coffee bars. Seattle, for example, sells a huge range of upmarket (and expensive) coffees such as latté, iced coffee and the No Fun Vanilla.

Seattle has built a chain of 56 coffee bars and the deal will be used by Starbucks as its springboard into Europe. Britain already has several coffee shop chains including Costa Coffee, Madisons and Coffee Republic. There are around 200 outlets across the country but this is dwarfed by the market in the US. Starbucks alone has more than 1,600 branches across America and the Pacific Rim.

Backed by Starbucks, the Seattle Coffee Company plans to add a further 30 outlets in the UK this year.

Biotech scorns Millar's claims

By Andrew Yates

BRITISH Biotech went on the offensive against its former head of clinical research yesterday and questioned the "reasons and motivations" behind what it described as "a continued campaign through the media".

A statement issued by the company's chairman, John Raisman, said the board considered statements by Dr Andrew Millar "to be ill-informed and irresponsible". Dr Millar, who was dismissed on Monday as the group's head of clinical trials, has made a series of allegations about the conduct of the board and the way it has handled the clinical trials of the company's key drugs.

The statement added: "The board has already said it will issue a full circular to shareholders. This will include a review of the company's approach to strategy, an update on research and development programmes, a statement of year-end cash balances and a detailed response to the allegations made by its former employee Dr Andrew Millar."

Dr Millar responded: "I have raised specific and substantive matters on a wide range of issues including strategy and corporate governance. I think they deserve specific answers. I'm certain shareholders will not be satisfied with this."

It is understood that Dr Millar is unhappy with the limited scope of an internal report undertaken by solicitors Cameron McKenna. It is understood that Dr Millar gave full disclosure to the firm, including documents relating to his concerns over the progress of various clinical trials and the company's business plan. However, it is understood these were not included as the report focused only on director share dealings.

Meanwhile Chiroscience, one of British Biotech's rivals, added to the group's problems yesterday when it claimed early trials of its own cancer treatment had not produced the same sort of side effects experienced by patients taking Marimastat.

Dr John Padfield, chief executive of Chiroscience, said: "British Biotech has already released data on its compound which shows joint-pain side effects. Our research suggests that is due to the release of inflammatory chemicals into the body.... Our animal models show that our compound is more potent than Marimastat."

Chiroscience pointed out that Bayer is also producing a rival to Marimastat which has also shown an absence of any side effects.

However, British Biotech claimed that the development of Marimastat had a "two to three-year lead" on treatments from its competitors.

Investment column, page 24

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£899 £1056.33 inc VAT
As 233M but with 64Mb RAM, 6.4Gb hard disk, PC-TV system with Teletext, Video capture Videophone receive, IBM speech recognition (microphone optional extra), faster IBM 6x86MX PR233 (233M-2) processor with MMX, 4Mb graphics using system RAM, and larger 15" SVGA colour screen (17" optional extra)
Product codes 15" 553 17" 554

3 GREAT DEALS!

Specification	233M	233M-1	233M-2
RAM	32Mb	32Mb	64Mb
Hard disk	4.3Gb	4.3Gb	6.4Gb
Screen	14"	15"	15" (or 17")*
PC TV system	-	-	YES
Graphics	2Mb	4Mb	4Mb
Speech recognition	-	YES	YES
Videophone receive	-	-	YES
Relative performance	120	120	135
Price excluding VAT	£699	£799	£899

* Optional extra

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Daewoo to take half stake in LDV in £160m plan for new range of vans

By Michael Harrison

THE KOREAN conglomerate Daewoo will take a stake of up to 50 per cent in the Birmingham-based van group LDV as part of its agreement to invest £160m in a new van range. LDV also intends to float on the stock market within three years.

Details of the joint venture were given in London yesterday by Kim Woo-choong, the Daewoo chairman, who also confirmed that a deal to sell 35 per cent of the company's car division to General Motors of the US was due to be agreed in June.

Daewoo Motor had turnover of $8bn last year and sold just over one million cars worldwide. This year it aims to sell 175,000 cars in Europe.

The investment in a new range of light commercial vehicles, supported by a £25m government grant, will create 2,000 jobs at LDV, quadruple production to 80,000 vans a year and see Birmingham-built vans exported to Korea for the first time. Up to 75 per cent of LDV's output will be sold overseas.

Daewoo is to pay £25m for its stake in LDV, which made post-tax profits of £19m last year and is valued at £140m-£150m.

The investment by the Korean conglomerate will see the combined management and staff shareholding reduced from 55 per cent to under 30 per cent. Institutional investors 3i, Mercury Asset Management and Dunedin, who backed the buyout of the business five years ago, will be diluted from 45 per cent to just over 20 per cent.

The Birmingham plant will produce 40,000 LDV-badged and 40,000 Daewoo-badged vans a year, while Daewoo plans to build LDV vans at a plant in Lublin, Poland, which is scheduled to reach production of 100,000 a year.

Allan Amey, chief executive of LDV, accepted that the sector of the van market LDV is entering is intensely competitive but he said the combination of highly efficient manufacturing techniques and a flexible and co-operative workforce would enable LDV to meet its production targets.

LDV will concentrate on developing the lighter van, codenamed the BD100, while Daewoo will be responsible for a heavier version, the LD100.

THE INVESTMENT COLUMN

EDITED BY ANDREW YATES

Cash boost at Chiroscience

IF NOTHING ELSE the whole sorry episode of British Biotech and the furore over the departure of Dr Andrew Millar, its clinical research director, has reminded investors what a lottery the biotech sector really is.

So Chiroscience gave the battered sector a much needed morale boost yesterday when it announced that its flagship drug should be on the market in Europe by the end of the year and in the US six months later. Chiroscience has teamed up with Zeneca to push through the development of Chirocaine, a long-lasting local anaesthetic. If it gets past the final regulatory hurdles, Chiroscience will make at least £200m from the deal over the next 10 years.

The Zeneca tie-up has also solved Chiroscience's money worries for the time being, immediately swelling its coffers by £15m and leaving it with more than £40m in the bank. With a future "cash burn" of less than £2m a month it, in effect, removes the need to call on shareholders for more money.

ChiroTech, which supplies other drug companies with intermediate chemicals, has also sealed a £25m deal with Glaxo Wellcome to supply ingredients for its new Aids treatment. The deal should ensure ChiroTech continues to produce a steady rise in profits. More importantly, it will increase the value of the business to perhaps £100m when Chiroscience decides to sell or hive it off.

The good news helped Chiroscience's shares jump 20.5p to 331.5p yesterday. But it is not enough to justify Chiroscience's market capitalisation, which has risen to £365m. That valuation relies on the group's product pipeline and here Chiroscience carries the same safety warning as other biotech stocks. But at least it looks on a more solid financial footing than most and the group forecasts it will break into the black by 2001. And investors can take comfort from the fact that Chiroscience's biggest projects are being backed by the industry heavyweights.

Like British Biotech and most of the drugs industry it is chasing the holy grail of a cancer drug. Unlike British Biotech, early tests suggest its own treatment has no side effects and Chiroscience has enlisted the support of Bristol-Myers Squibb.

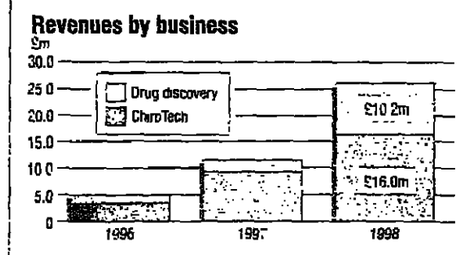
For the biotech buff Chiroscience looks a safer bet than most.

Chiroscience: At a glance

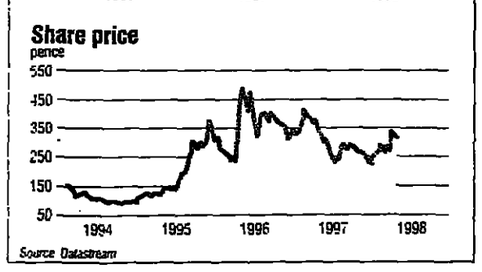
Market value. £365m, share price 331.5p (+20.5p)

Five-year record	94	95	96	97	98
Turnover (£m)	1.9	1.7	5.0	11.5	26.2
Pre-tax profits (£m)	-4.3	-9.2	-11.6	-19.3	-23.3
Earnings per share (p)	-11.9	-13.6	-16.8	-22.5	-21.6
Dividends per share (p)	-	-	-	-	-

Revenues by business



Share price



Source Datastream

Shake-up at Grampian

BILL Hughes, Grampian's chairman, and his fellow directors must have had extra helpings of Scotch porridge judging by the sudden speed with which they have shaken up the sleepy conglomerate.

After years of trundling along without doing much, Grampian has embarked on a frenetic round of corporate activity, transforming itself into a retailer.

The pharmaceuticals division has been sold for £66m and sports goods and knitwear divisions are also on the chopping block.

Grampian's main business is now the 245 strong Edinburgh Woollen Mill chain. Despite new openings it had a far from cosy year, with like-for-like sales of traditional Scottish woollies falling in recent months due to warmer weather and the strong pound, which deterred tourist spending.

But there is still plenty of growth to come from the rapid expansion of the business, with 100 new stores planned over the next three years.

Its other main business, the transport operation, remains a steady earner It is expanding into north-west England, creating extra capacity and increased utilisation, especially in the niche business of carrying full whisky bottles south to England as well as returning empties back to Scotland.

Overall turnover fell in the 12 months to the end of January and profit before tax was only 3 per cent higher at £20m. But underlying operating profits on the businesses they had left rose 13 per cent.

Analysts have upgraded forecasts for the current year to £22.2m followed by £25.8m in the following 12 months, putting the shares on a price-earnings ratio of 9 falling to less than 8.

The shares gained 5p to 131.5p yesterday and are well below their 1997 peak. A yield of 6.6 per cent also looks attractive. Good value.

Profit swings at Hiscox

HISCOX provided another good example yesterday of how the vagaries of the Lloyd's of London market can play havoc with profits. Last year its underwriting profits, which related to 1995 at Lloyd's, jumped from £6.2m to £14.5m.

Premiums were so high and claims so low that Bronek Masojada, the group's managing director, describes it as "nirvana for insurers, something that happens once in a generation". But new players flooded the market in 1996. Capacity grew and rates tumbled.

Lloyd's has predicted underwriting profits for the whole market will fall from £1bn for 1995 to £600m for 1996, blowing a hole in Hiscox's profits this year. The group is braced for a fall in underwriting earnings to £9.5m. Its reputation in the City also suffered a setback two months ago after it sacked an employee for underwriting a $150m credit risk business without authority.

Hiscox hopes to reduce its dependence on Lloyd's by developing its general insurance business. So far, the strategy has not gone to plan and the division lost £4.2m last year. But management have been replaced, staff sacked, business outsourced and the company is shifting to big-margin areas, such as household insurance and professional indemnity, which should be sufficient to turn the operation around.

Charterhouse Tilney predicts 1998 profits of £18.5m. Following a dip of 7.5p to 167.5p yesterday, that puts Hiscox on a forward multiple of 18.5. Investors should ignore the short-term wobbles. With peers on forward multiples of 30 plus, it could be one to tuck away.

Summary of Accounts

for the year ended 31 December 1997

PORT OF LONDON AUTHORITY

Profit and Loss Account	1997 £m	1996 £m
Turnover	30.1	28.0
Operating expenditure	29.0	27.1
Operating profit	1.1	0.9
Net interest	0.9	0.7
Dividends receivable	8.9	4.4
Repayment of Government grants	(8.8)	(4.4)
Profit on ordinary activities before taxation	2.1	1.6
Taxation	(0.3)	-
Profit for the year	1.8	1.6
Transfer to stock redemption fund	(0.1)	(0.1)
Transfer to profit and loss account reserve	1.7	1.5

Balance Sheet	1997 £m	1996 £m
Fixed assets:		
Tangible assets	25.4	24.2
Investments:		
Port of London Properties Ltd Group	9.0	13.4
Stock redemption fund	9.6	9.5
	44.0	47.1
Net current asset	13.4	13.0
	57.4	60.1
Creditors:		
Amounts falling due after more than one year:		
Loans	10.2	10.2
Other amounts	2.7	2.8
Reserves:		
Revaluation	9.0	13.4
Stock redemption fund	9.6	9.5
Profit and loss	25.9	24.2
	57.4	60.1

Cash Flow Statement

(Decrease)/increase in cash	(2.3)	2.1

SIR BRIAN SHAW, Chairman — D.J. JEFFERY, Chief Executive — G.P. ELLIS, Chief Financial Officer

Published by the Port of London Authority under Section 8(3) of the Port of London Act 1968

The above is an extract from the published Accounts of the Port of London Authority for the year ended 31 December 1997 which have been delivered to The Secretary of State for Transport

G.E.Ennals, Secretary

COPIES OF THE REPORT AND ACCOUNTS 1997 CAN BE OBTAINED FROM THE SECRETARY'S DEPARTMENT, PORT OF LONDON AUTHORITY, DEVON HOUSE, 58-60 ST. KATHARINE'S WAY LONDON E1 9LB. PRICE £5.00

S&N puts £21m into mega-pubs

By Andrew Yates

THE STRENGTH of the pub industry's commitment to themed inns was demonstrated again yesterday by Scottish & Newcastle. The pub and leisure giant unveiled plans to invest another £21.5m in its Rat & Parrot chain, taking it from 43 to 70 outlets over the next 12 months. The scheme which will create 1,300 new jobs.

S&N is creating a new breed of mega-pubs, covering at least 4,000 square feet each. As part of this plan it is opening the largest bar in the UK in Leeds this week.

S&N is hoping to cash in on the growing number of women who come to its Rat & Parrot outlets by installing a "coffee culture" throughout the chain. It was the first pub to offer coffee bars and pastries to customers in an effort to attract trade throughout the day.

It also targeted women by banishing the traditional image of a dark and dingy pub and replacing it with light and airy surroundings at most of its outlets. S&N plans to have nearly 200 Rat & Parrots by the end of 2001 in major cities throughout the UK.

Overall S&N is pumping £200m into its branded pub estate this year, on brands such as Chef & Brewer and John Barras, its community pub chain.

Within four years it forecasts that 65 per cent of its managed pub estate will be made up of branded pubs.

The themed pub market has exploded over the last few years, with the big pub groups pouring billions of pounds into the industry to establish and promote their own brands. Competitors such as Allied Domecq, Bass and Whitbread have already announced their own huge investment programmes, which will create thousands of new jobs.

The creation of the new jobs comes just 24 hours after S&N announced its was cutting 300 jobs at its brewing arm following a radical overhaul of the business designed to cope with problems associated with the growing dominance of independent pub chains who are demanding cheaper beer.

Miles Robottom, Rat and Parrot brand manager, said: "Rat & Parrots benefit from their town and city centre locations and have proven appeal to a wide audience at all times of the day and will adapt extremely well to large sites. It is an extremely exciting time for the brand."

However, not everybody is convinced that the themed pub market can continue to grow at such a pace. Analysts point out that there are already signs that some pub brands are showing signs of flagging under the intense competition.

Irish pubs, for example, have lost their sparkle, according to industry observers. Sales in these outlets are falling and pub groups are reining back on new openings or re-branding their outlets, industry observers say.

The huge number of themed outlets springing up around the country has also raised concerns that the traditional local pub faces an uphill struggle to survive.

Themed pubs: S&N plans a chain of 200 Rat & Parrots

Schroders sticks with plans to remain independent

INVESTMENT bank Schroders reiterated to shareholders yesterday that it wanted to stay independent. In a statement prepared for the company's shareholders' meeting, Win Bischoff, Schroders chairman, noted recent press comment on consolidation in the financial services industry, but said: "Schroders has for many years pursued a successful policy of independence focused on client service and shareholder value. Management and the Schroder family together remain confident of the view that, as in the past, the interests of clients, staff and shareholders are best served by a continuation of this policy of independence."

Hemingway bids for Olives

HEMINGWAY Properties yesterday announced a £28.6m recommended offer for Olives Property. The offer of eight new Hemingway shares for every nine Olives shares values each Olives share at 42.5p, a 29 per cent premium over the 33p closing price on Tuesday. A full cash alternative of 40p per share is available. Hemingway, which has a portfolio of commercial property in London and the UK, said it had received undertakings to accept the offer representing 34 per cent of Olives' share capital.

Reed warns on strong pound

REED International said yesterday that current trading conditions were little changed since it announced its annual results on 12 March. "We expect good underlying growth across our businesses," the chairman, Nigel Stapleton, told the company's annual meeting. The Anglo-Dutch publisher and information provider said a stronger pound and an increase in investment in new products and services will have an unfavourable impact on the first half comparison with 1997.

Nat Power invests in Malaysia

ELECTRICITY generator National Power is to invest $125m (£75m) in the Malaysian power company Malakoff. National Power said it would buy a stake representing about 15 per cent of the enlarged share capital of Malakoff. National Power, which earlier entered an alliance as Malakoff's exclusive foreign partner and investor in future Malaysian energy projects, had conditionally agreed to buy the shares from Malaysian Resources Corp.

Premier buys Dutch estate

PROPERTY group Premier Land is buying six properties in Amsterdam for £19.4m and announced it was changing its name to Probus Estates. The company said the purchases completes its year-long restructuring programme and was "consistent with the stated strategy of pursuing investment opportunities with sound growth potential and positive cash flow". It said the properties, which have a net annual rental income of about £1.7m and consist of 10 office and warehouse properties and the Magna Plaza shopping centre in Amsterdam.

'Independent' winner

NIC Cicutti, the personal finance editor of *The Independent*, has been named best national/consumer writer of the year in the Scottish Life Pension Awards. The award is the latest in a series for Nic: recently, he won the personal finance journalist of the year award, sponsored by Bradford & Bingley Building Society. The award marked a rare "double" for *The Independent*: its personal finance section was also voted the best among all national newspapers. A few weeks earlier, Nic was also named life insurance and pensions writer of the year by the Association of British Insurers, the industry trade body.

Royal Bank of Scotland

FOLLOWING a story in yesterday's *Independent*, The Royal Bank of Scotland has asked us to make clear that any implication in a statement from People's Bank UK of mounting bad debts and poor profitability in RBS Atlanta is wrong and incorrect. In fact, Advanta has been one of the fastest-growing credit card businesses in the UK. RBS Advanta has moved into profit and continues to grow strongly.

COMPANY RESULTS

	Turnover £	Pre-tax £	EPS	Dividend
Air London Intl (I)	21.35m (17.86m)	1.35m (1.12m)	9.3p (7.8p)	3.0p (2.5p)
Atlantic Caspian (F)	2.62m (1.93m)	-0.509m (-0.139m)	-0.007p (-0.005p)	nil
Deep Sea Leisure (F)	2.47m (2.25m)	0.429m (0.195m)	6.85p (3.11p)	nil
Grampian Holdings (F)	244.28m (262.09m)	20.0m (19.34m)	12.80p (11.88p)	7.20p (6.56p)
Hemingway Props (F)	- (-)	7.6m (6.46m)	3.21p (2.95p)	0.61p (0.55p)
Hiscox (F)	- (-)	16.39m (14.34m)	8.2p (11.6p)	3.3p (3.0p)
Park Estate (F)	1.07m (0.959m)	0.507m (0.465m)	15.65p (14.88p)	10.0p(-)
Ryan Hotels (F)	IR28.45m (IR27.34m)	IR5.02m (IR4.04m)	6.69p (5.18p)	2.25p (-)
Shiloh (F)	49.04m (35.43m)	0.668m (1.34m)	8.54p (16.14p)	4.25p (4.0p)
VTR (I)	13.08m (8.61m)	1.006m (-0.850m)	6.95p (2.34p)	1.75p (1.75p)

(F) - Final (I) - Interim † EPS is pre-exceptionals *Dividend to be paid as a RID

Halifax hits out at Midshires 'confusion'

By Michael Harrison

HALIFAX yesterday launched a scathing attack on the board of Birmingham Midshires for a "highly confusing strategy" which has left members and staff in limbo over the building society's plans to become a bank.

Halifax, which itself converted last year, said it was "very frustrated" with the approach of the Midshires board following its decision seven weeks ago to renege on a takeover by Royal Bank of Scotland.

Dick Spellman, director of distribution at Halifax, said: "We are extremely disappointed that after seven weeks the board are no nearer to sorting this out."

The decision to pull out of the £630m offer from RBS followed a £780m offer from Halifax. The Midshires board was widely expected to take up the Halifax offer.

Speaking after watching the Midshires' annual general meeting, Mr Spellman said: "We were totally confused by what they put forward as their strategy. They went back and forth, saying they were looking at just about anything you can think of.

"Having ostensibly gone for this, to be saying now they can examine just about every option under the table is highly frustrating for members."

Members at a packed agm in Birmingham were told the board had not ruled out any options, including remaining as a mutual. Directors said they were neutral on the issue.

The board is barred from discussing bids with other parties under an exclusivity clause drawn up last August as part of the RBS bid. According to RBS, the clause was insisted on by Mike Jackson, chief executive of Midshires.

RBS has indicated it would expect compensation – likely to run into the tens of millions – to release Midshires from the clause. The clause stays in force until the end of 1998.

John Leighfield, chairman of Midshires, said the board had been trying to contact RBS, "all day, every day" with detailed proposals to release them from the agreement.

"We had hoped to be able to report the result of these negotiations with RBS to members at the agm, but unfortunately have not yet concluded our discussions. We will notify members of their response as soon as is practicable after we receive it."

Directors faced a barrage of questions from members disappointed with their handling of flotation plans. One member went so far as to call for Mr Leighfield to resign.

David McKaigue, a member of Save Our Building Societies, which is campaigning against a takeover, said: "The level of feeling there was very considerable."

US banks move in on new sites in the City of London

LONDON's status as one of the world's leading financial centres received a double boost yesterday from the news that two US institutions are to invest in new sites in the City.

State Street Corp said it had received Bank of England approval to establish State Street Bank Europe (SSBE). SSBE will be headquartered in London and is likely to lead to the creation of 100 jobs. Under the provisions of European single market legislation, SSBE will provide a range of integrated global custody, treasury, investment management, portfolio administration, broker and accounting services to institutional investors.

State Street Corp is the world's leading specialist in service institutional investors and has $4.4 trillion (£2.6 trillion) under custody and $458bn under management.

David A Spina, SSBE's chairman, said: "The lower interest-rate environment created by the euro, coupled with pension reform and the expanded interest in equity investing, will create demand for the products and services in which we are specialist, including quantitative investment management, trade execution and daily pricing."

State Street Corp has been in Europe for 25 years and currently services institutional investors in 12 European countries from eight locations.

Meanwhile, Donaldson, Lufkin & Jenrette (DLJ) is poised to take over a six-storey building near its existing London HQ for equity sales and trading.

DLJ expects to sign a lease within a fortnight for 100,000 sq ft at 110 Old Broad Street, which will house, along with the equities business, taxable fixed income group and investment services.

The move will more than double DLJ's London operations. The expansion comes as DLJ builds a European equities business from scratch. The core of the international team has been hired.

Dewhirst directors cash in

By Nigel Cope

DIRECTORS of Dewhirst, the Marks & Spencer clothing supplier, cashed in share options worth more than £2m last year, according to the company's latest annual report.

The biggest beneficiary was David Witt, the chief executive, with a total of £1.4m including salary and options. He exercised his "shadow" options on 350,000 during the year, netting £595,000. This was in addition to £343,000 gain on share options and his £445,000 salary. Michael Terry, another director, exercised options worth £512,000 in addition to his total pay of £186,000. Three other directors, Brian Farrow, John Haley and Robin Horsell, cashed in options of £150,000 to £222,000 each.

Dewhirst's profits increased by 19 per cent last year to £34.5m. The shares have risen from 195.5p a year ago to 231p, unchanged yesterday.

Meanwhile, corporate governance specialists expressed concern about directors' contracts at Lucas Varity, the engineering group. They have raised questions about the lump-sum payments that would be due in the event of a takeover. Victor Rice, the chief executive, who was paid £631,274 last year, would be in line for a payment equivalent to 4.4 times salary. Neil Arnold, the finance director, and Tony Gilroy, a director, would be in line for payments of 3.35 times salary (£399,856 and £284,139 respectively).

The company said the payments would not be renewed after the 1999 in the case of Mr Rice and after 2001 in the case of the other two directors.

More order-driven confusion as rogue trades hit BP

MARKET REPORT

DEREK PAIN

IT WAS as if the controversial *order-driven trading system* was intent on underlining its own limitations.

As the accident-prone computerised share dealing *operation encountered* yet more stinging criticism, it offered further evidence of the way *it distorts late prices* and, consequently, makes an absolute nonsense of the final Footsie calculation.

British Petroleum, allegedly up 61p at 960p, was a glaring example of mispricing created by rogue trades. The final spread between buying and selling prices was a remarkable 912p to 960p.

The last recorded transaction was 908.5p although there were a couple of trades at 960p *towards the close. However,* most deals in the last hour were around 915p, a 16p gain seemingly inspired by Salomon Smith Barney.

Yet, no doubt inspired by the maverick prices, someone was trying to sell 17,529 shares at 960p as the market shut.

TI, the engineer, was another SETs stock seemingly suffering from spaghetti-fingered traders. It headed the list of mid cap fallers, off 37p at 515p. Two late trades, totalling just 1,121 shares, did *the damage. For the rest of the* day deals on and off the order book were around 550p.

The order-driven system's uncertain display coincided with a Reuters survey showing most fund managers felt the SETs system had slowed dealing and reduced liquidity.

Tradepoint, the little financial group hoping to *emerge as a modest rival to the* Stock Exchange, was also unflattering about order-driven *trading. Chief executive Nic* Stuchfield said: "Tradepoint's experience indicates that investors are getting a very rough deal in SETs. This has been resoundingly endorsed not only by research we commissioned among UK fund managers but also by careful consideration of the Stock Exchange's own consultative document."

Footsie, helped by the suspect late BP deals, ended 26.5 points higher at 5,833.1. Thirty minutes before the close it was off 1.5.

Lloyds TSB finished 23.5p down at 885p as CSFB wielded the profit forecast axe. *It cut this year's estimate* to £3.3bn from £3.6bn and next year's from £4bn to £3.7bn. *The share recommendation* was shifted from buy to sell.

The investment house said the share valuation "places an unrealistic burden of *expectation upon management* in the context of both of past achievement and of a realistic *assessment of the future*".

Enterprise Oil gained 13.5p to 549.5p as stories *swirled of a major Norwegian* find. The Donatello field in the Norwegian North Sea *could produce a 100,000-*barrels-a-day flow. There was also speculation about significant gas deposits. Enterprise has 25 per cent of the field which is operated by Amoco. *The oil content, if the rumours are correct,* could be worth up to 20p on the group's net asset value.

Talk that **PowerGen** could find itself on the receiving end of a bid lifted the shares 17p to 798p. The theory is that the unsuccessful US contender in the sealed bid struggle for the Eastern electricity group will turn its attention to another utility and PG is regarded as the most obvious target.

Vodafone, up 18p at 640p, *was another to encounter bid* speculation but **Zeneca** fell back 46p to 2,452p as bid hopes faded.

Ashstead, the plant hire group, rose a further 5p to 265p following its US analysts' trip, and **Rubicon**, the engineer, *improved 27.5p to 215p after* Charterhouse Tilney suggested the shares were worth 260p.

Casino shares enjoyed a spin on hopes that the Government will relax gaming taxes. **London Clubs International** gained 3.5p to 206.5p and **Capital Corporation** 4p to 110.5p.

PizzaExpress, planning *European investment meetings,* edged ahead 2.5p to 779.5p. **Thistle Hotels** hardened 4.5p *to 177p on the suspicion that* the boardroom changes at Brierley Investments, the New Zealand-based group, will lead to the sale of all, or most, of its 46 per cent shareholding. *Brierley is known to be un*happy about Thistle's uninspiring share performance *since* last year's flotation.

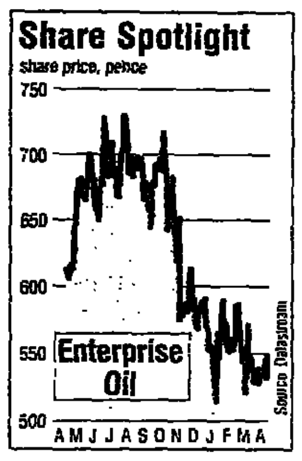
Sunderland's likely failure to achieve an automatic Division One promotion spot left the shares 50p off at 447.5p.

Datrontech, *a components* group, firmed 5.5p to 123p as 4 million shares, 10 per cent of the capital, were placed mostly at 111p. Founders Steven King and Ian Boyle *sold 3 million. They are left* with 23.8 per cent and 16.7 per cent respectively.

Olives Property added 7p to 40p as Hemingway Properties arrived with a 42.5p offer, pricing the company at £28.6m.

Inch Kenneth Kajang, an obscure Malaysian leisure and plantation group, enjoyed the day's best gain, a remarkable *275p to 375p. The price was* 850p a year ago.

Share Spotlight



TAKING STOCK

MEDISYS climbed 3.5p to a 33p high, signalling a far-reaching restructuring and the arrival of Dr Donald Panoz, *founder of Elan*, a big American medical group. The company intends to float its Biocure pharmaceutical research side as a separately quoted vehicle. Dr Panoz is investing £600,000 for shares priced at 30p and joining the *board. Medisys is also paying* £7.4m for Lukens Medical, a US maker of healthcare and *medical products.*

ENTERPRISE INNS has moved ahead strongly since snapping up the Gibbs Mew pubs chain earlier this year. The shares gained a further 6p to a 383.5p peak. The company *has around 1,500 pubs and is* expected to sharply increase this year's profits from £12.7m to £20.25m.

EADIE, the engineer *bumping along at 11p, is a* recovery play, believes stockbroker Greig Middleton, *suggesting profits of £1.1m* this year.

Share Price Data

Prices are in sterling except where stated. The yield is the latest twelve months' declared gross dividend as a percentage of the share price. The price/earnings (P/E) ratio is the shareprice divided by last year's earnings per share, excluding extraordinary items but including exceptionals.
Other details: x Ex rights; x Ex-dividend; a Ex-all; s Suspended; p Partly Paid; np Nil Paid. *AIM
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(FT5 plc, London EC2A 4FJ) *0891 calls cost 50p per minute.*

Seaq volume: 808.5m trades 56,969 — Gilts index 104.39 +0.12

Market Leaders: Top 20 volumes (at 5:00pm)

Stock	Vol	Stock	Vol	Stock	Vol	Stock	Vol
Prestbury Group	27.72m	Aegis Group	14.65m	Pilkington	8.58m	Brit Steel	6.63m
Reece	26.40m	Sears	11.6m	Reed Intl	8.31m	Dana Petroleum	6.63m
BG	25.62m	Signet Group	10.04m	Shell Transp	7.10m	Brit Telecom	6.58m
Lloyds TSB Group	18.46m	Gen Elec	9.72m	Reuters GRP	6.94m	Hillsdown Hldgs	6.57m
Consoltx	15.30m	Smithkline Beech	9.07m	Standard Charter	6.77m	Coats Viyella	6.46m

FTSE 100 Index hour by hour

Open	5806.6		11:00	5825.7	Up 19.1	15:00	5806.5	Down 0.1
9:00	5784.2	Down 22.4	12:00	5829.7	Up 23.1	16:00	5805.2	Down 1.4
10:00	5814.0	Up 7.4	13:00	5784.6	Down 22.0	Close	5833.1	Up 26.5

Alcoholic Beverages

High	Low	Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	P/E	Code
[illegible]							

Banks, Merchant
High	Low	Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	P/E	Code
[illegible]							

Banks, Retail
High	Low	Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	P/E	Code
[illegible]							

Breweries Pubs & Rest
High	Low	Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	P/E	Code
[illegible]							

Building/Construction
High	Low	Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	P/E	Code
[illegible]							

Building Materials
High	Low	Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	P/E	Code
[illegible]							

Chemicals
High	Low	Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	P/E	Code
[illegible]							

Distributors
High	Low	Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	P/E	Code
[illegible]							

Diversified Industrials
High	Low	Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	P/E	Code
[illegible]							

Electricity
High	Low	Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	P/E	Code
[illegible]							

Electronics
High	Low	Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	P/E	Code
[illegible]							

Engineering
High	Low	Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	P/E	Code
[illegible]							

Engineering Vehicles
High	Low	Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	P/E	Code
[illegible]							

Extractive Industries
High	Low	Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	P/E	Code
[illegible]							

Food Producers
High	Low	Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	P/E	Code
[illegible]							

Gas Distribution
High	Low	Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	P/E	Code
[illegible]							

Health Care
High	Low	Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	P/E	Code
[illegible]							

Household Goods
High	Low	Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	P/E	Code
[illegible]							

Insurance
High	Low	Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	P/E	Code
[illegible]							

Investment Trusts
High	Low	Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	P/E	Code
[illegible]							

IND12

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Leisure & Hotels
High	Low	Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	P/E	Code
[illegible]							

Life Assurance
High	Low	Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	P/E	Code
[illegible]							

Media
High	Low	Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	P/E	Code
[illegible]							

Oil Integrated
High	Low	Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	P/E	Code
[illegible]							

Oil Exploration & Production
High	Low	Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	P/E	Code
[illegible]							

Other Financial
High	Low	Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	P/E	Code
[illegible]							

Paper & Printing
High	Low	Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	P/E	Code
[illegible]							

Pharmaceuticals
High	Low	Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	P/E	Code
[illegible]							

Property
High	Low	Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	P/E	Code
[illegible]							

Retailers, Food
High	Low	Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	P/E	Code
[illegible]							

Retailers, General
High	Low	Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	P/E	Code
[illegible]							

Support Services
High	Low	Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	P/E	Code
[illegible]							

Telecommunications
High	Low	Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	P/E	Code
[illegible]							

Textiles & Apparel
High	Low	Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	P/E	Code
[illegible]							

Tobacco
High	Low	Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	P/E	Code
626	491	BAT Inds	572.00x	+2.00	5.0	17.9	1003
389	244	Gallaher	309.00x	-5.00	7.8	8.9	2222
467	361	Imps Tob	432.75	+7.75	6.2	10.6	1271

Transport
High	Low	Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	P/E	Code
[illegible]							

Water
High	Low	Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	P/E	Code
[illegible]							

Government Securities

Index-Linked / Perpetual / Shorts / Mediums / Longs
High	Low	Stock	Price	Chg	Red Yld	Code
[illegible]						

Recent Issues

Stock	Price	Chg(p)
ARM	645.00	0.00
Bovis	260.50	0.00
British Thornton	278.00	0.00
Desire	109.00	-1.50
Express Dairies	161.00	0.00
Hardlord	2.75	0.00
LLP	329.00	-1.50
Marchpole	86.50	0.00
Onslow	324.00	0.00
Oxford Glycosciences	305.50	-4.00
Paul	395.00	-1.00
Salamon	79.50	-0.50

source: **Bloomberg**
www.bloomberg.com/uk

Young warns of euro disaster

By Michael Harrison

LORD Young of Graffham, the former Conservative Cabinet minister and now president of the Institute of Directors (IoD), yesterday launched a blistering attack on the euro, warning that economic and monetary union (EMU) could prove a disaster.

Opening the IoD's annual convention in London, Lord Young said that EMU could usher in an era of trade union strife, higher unemployment and increased taxes.

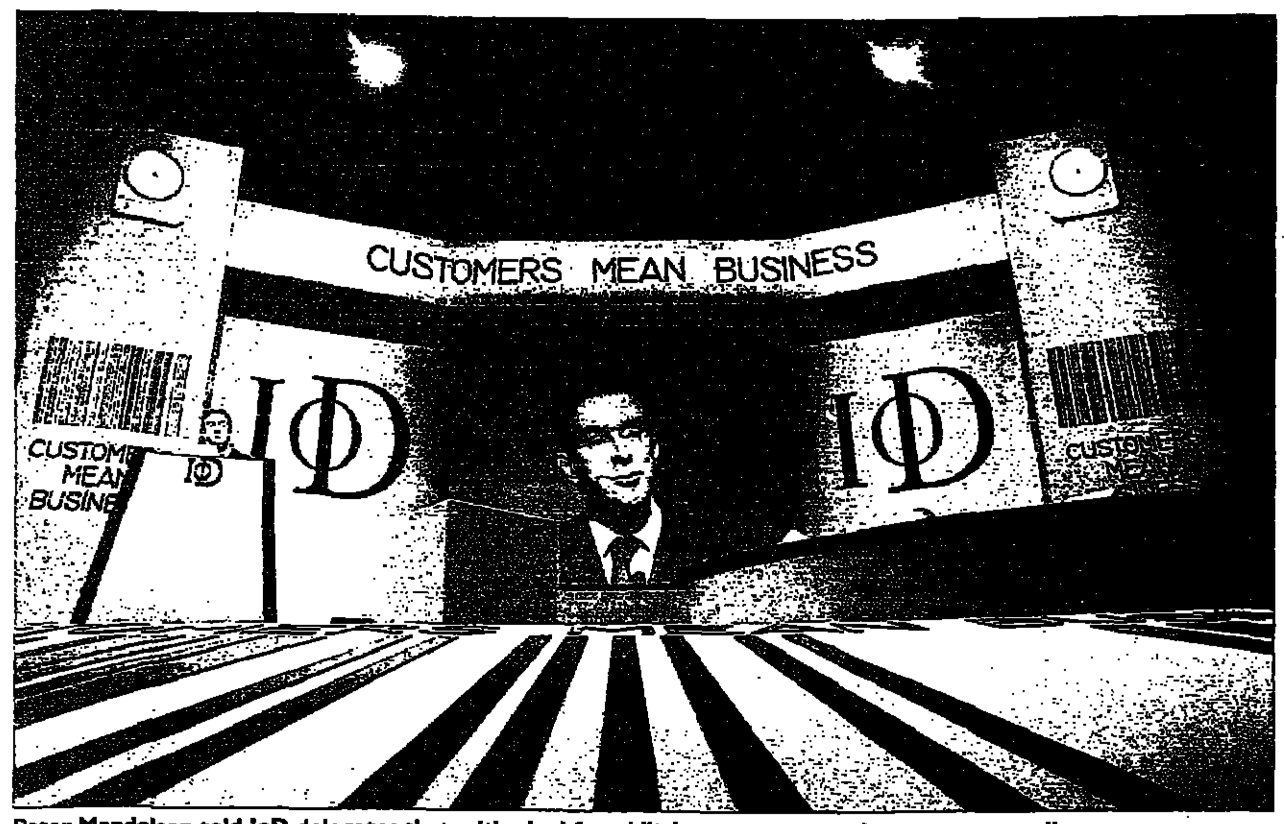
"A euro that includes Italy, that includes the borrowings of Belgium, includes the social economics of France, includes even the hopes of Greece, cannot ever be a strong euro," he told delegates.

"A euro based on financial transactions which, if carried out by you or me, would lead to prosecutions by the authorities, will not become a haven for funds. The euro will only encourage a flight into dollars and then the pound. We may have to get used to a strong pound."

Lord Young said the example of Ireland, which will be in the first wave of monetary union, was instructive. It was in the middle of an economic boom but instead of raising interest rates from their present level of 8 per cent, the Irish authorities faced the "nightmare" of rates crashing to around 3 per cent at the beginning of next year.

This would leave Ireland with a choice between explosive inflation or swingeing tax increases to keep the lid on the economy.

The IoD president said that despite suggestions that the British government was preparing to assure its European partners that it would join the euro immediately after the election, none of the five conditions laid down by Gordon Brown, the Chancellor, for membership had been met nor was likely to be.



Peter Mandelson told IoD delegates that critics had found little reason to attack government policy

Hear our concerns, bosses tell Mandelson

THE HEAD of the Institute of Directors, one of the UK's leading business organisations, yesterday accused Peter Mandelson, the senior government minister, of trying to sweep away concerns from industry about Government policies.

The Minister without Portfolio told the Institute's annual convention in London that critics had found little with which to attack the Government. He challenged the 2,000 delegates to name a single area where there had been a sustained assault on Government policy.

But Tim Melville-Ross, the IoD's director-general, said business did have concerns about a number of policies, including planned legislation on union recognition and the effects of signing up to the Social Chapter.

"There is a certain amount that New Labour is doing that is right. But to sweep away the concerns that we have is very wrong," he said. The Government was determined to press ahead with policies which businesses did not like, they complained.

But Mr Melville-Ross said the relationship between the Government and business was open and access to ministers was good.

Archie Norman, vice-chairman of the Tories and chairman of the Asda Supermarket group, accused Mr Mandelson of making "cheap political points" by blaming the previous Government over the state of the economy.

"To say there is nothing to criticise about the Labour Government is ridiculous," he said. "We know there are a lot of people out there who do not want the Government to sign up to the Social Chapter, who don't want union recognition and don't believe a minimum wage is necessary. It is absurd to say there is nothing to criticise."

Mr Mandelson received polite applause from the captains of industry when he told them that Labour had made a "reasonable" start in Government.

He said Labour had completely lost touch with its "customer base" in the 1980s, reaching a point where most Labour voters actually agreed with former Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher's cutting of taxes and curbing of unions.

The Government's top priority now was to end the economic cycle of boom and bust, he said. He admitted there were real economic problems arising from the position which Labour inherited and he acknowledged that the current strength of the pound was a concern for industry.

"Of course it is tough and difficult at the moment, but only by getting the fundamentals right in sorting out the inflationary threat we inherited will we secure a stable and competitive pound in the medium term. We must end boom and bust and we will."

Outlining Labour's transition to its present success from the "lunacies" of the 1980s, he said: "Today, commentators often say that it was good PR and electoral organisation which got us where we are today.

"But that was only the final stage. Only when we had something new to market, a new, radical approach in the centre of British politics, did our marketing strategy work."

Mr Mandelson spoke of the Government's strategy to create "an Opportunity Britain – not the vision of opportunity where people say everyone is equally free to dine at the Ritz as long as they can afford to. But a vision of opportunity where the Government works on the individual's side to give him or her the chance to earn the money to make it to dinner at the Ritz. And if not the Ritz, to fulfil whatever potential lies uniquely with them."

– Agencies

PEOPLE & BUSINESS

JOHN WILLCOCK

CONGRATULATIONS to **Jimmy Herbert**, at 87 the oldest stockbroker in the City, who has left the sinking wreck of Branston & Gothard, to join Hichens Harrison, the Square Mile's oldest stockbroking firm.

Branston & Gothard, in case you forgot, is being shut down by the Securities and Futures Authority (SFA) for having insufficient capital. Hichens was founded in 1803, the very year that London coffee houses gave way to the formal stock exchange.

TWO of *The Guardian*'s most distinguished journalists, **Larry Elliott** and **Dan Atkinson**, have teamed up to write *The Age of Insecurity*, a book to be published on 28 May by Verso, price £17.00.

The tome is "a critique of post-Cold War capitalism, the samizdat for the left's counter-revolution," according to one awed critic. The US's respected *Publisher's Weekly* has gone so far as to call it "visionary".

The book was finished off in a mad scramble overnight, I'm told, fuelled by a bottle of Jamieson's and a takeaway curry at Mr Atkinson's flat in the Barbican, London.

Come eleven next morning, Mr Elliott plunged through the door at Verso with the completed manuscript, while Mr Atkinson collapsed into *The Guardian*'s Farringdon Road offices to report for duty. I await my copy with bated breath.

THE CREAM of London's litterati were gathered last night at the opening of the Islington Tup, the latest pub to be launched by **Hugh Corbett**, former founder of the Slug & Lettuce chain.

The north London boozer is the eighth in the "Tup" line and very nice it is, too. Although I couldn't help musing how strange it is that, just as the vogue for Irish theme pubs seems to be reaching its apogee in London, one of the Capital's oldest truly Irish pubs, Minogue's, has now been transformed into the Islington Tup. That's progress for you.

Mr Corbett is currently building a new management team, and is being strangely secretive about it: he's appointed a new finance director and a new acquisitions director, but he's not naming them.

He is prepared, however, to say that his new area manager for London is **Paul McKinley**, a former kingpin in the Harvey Floorbangers chain.

Mr "Sooty" Corbett is planning to expand his London chain of Tups from eight to 20 in time for flotation, pencilled in for next summer, and he's "desperately on the lookout for new sites", he tells me.

So if you own a boozer in a reasonable location which needs about £100,000 spent on doing it up, give him a ring.

ANYONE who's anyone will be at the Dorchester tonight in London's West End to help 450 lawyers celebrate Ireland's historic peace agreement.

The bash has been organised by Co-operation Ireland's Lawyer Support Group, a charity launched in 1987. Solicitors from London, Belfast, Dublin, Brussels, New York and Washington will be in attendance.

The guest list includes Clifford Chance, who advised the Ulster Unionists on their constitutional negotiations, and Akin Gump Hauer & Strauss, a US firm "very close to Bill Clinton", so I'm told.

Other Yankee guests will include top New York financial firm Brown & Wood and flash M&A outfit Skadden Arps.

A trio of law firms are set to fly in from Dublin; A& L Goodbody, who espoused true cooperation in their link with Belfast law firm Elliot Duffy Garrett; Arthur Cox, the first Dublin firm to open in Belfast, and McCann Fitzgerald.

Celebrities adding a froth to the social whirl will include **John Mortimer** CBE QC, who is making a speech in exchange for "a plain omelette and a bottle of champagne and not a penny more", it says here.

Also pencilled in are **George Carman** QC, **The Duchess of Abercorn** and her film-maker son **Jamie**; Kevin Maxwell's solicitor **Keith Oliver** of Peters & Peters; and Richard Branson's barrister **Richard Ferguson** QC.

The whole shindig is being sponsored by MeesPierson Fund Services, the Waxy O'Connor's pub group, legal recruiters Michael Page and Guinness. **Terry Neill**, chairman of Co-operation Ireland and chairman of the board of partners of Arthur Andersen, will urge lawyers present to harness the networking potential of those present to develop "mutually beneficial partnerships".

And last, but not least, for those looking to emigrate if the peace process should go wrong, top corporate immigration and entertainment firm Magrath & Co will be out in force. Make mine a Murphy's...

THOSE helpful people at Churchill Insurance are keen to remind me that National Pet Week starts on 2 May. In order to safeguard your pets from injury, Churchill says, "you should keep objects of curiosity, such as pipe cleaners, ladies' tights, plastic bags and fish hooks, out of reach". So now you know.

Foreign Exchange Rates

Country	Sterling Spot	Sterling 1 month	Sterling 3 month	Dollar Spot	Dollar 1 month	Dollar 3 month	D-Mark Spot
UK	10000			05958	05997	06014	03337
Australia	25746	25714	25657	1547	15420	15430	05591
Austria	21086	21052	20965	12627	12624	12620	70362
Belgium	61654	61667	61284	37059	36981	36956	20640
Canada	24015	23966	23872	14330	14372	14356	08014
Denmark	11429	11395	11330	68439	68334	68136	38138
ECU	15158	15145	15035	1108	11011	11057	06339
Finland	90956	90661	90106	54466	54368	54190	30352
France	10047	10014	9953	60052	60054	59850	33525
Germany	29966	29872	29633	17945	17914	17854	10000
Greece	52619	52046	53404	31629	31810	32118	17625
Hong Kong	12930	12923	12839	77425	77495	77571	43146
Ireland	11882	11872	11844	14055	14045	14039	07832
Italy	29606	29555	29429	17728	17724	17696	98791
Japan	22070	21942	21652	13216	13158	13040	73644
Malaysia	62458	62808	63469	37400	37665	38170	20841
Mexico	14192			84980			47356
Netherlands	33739	33639	33430	20205	20166	20099	11258
New Zealand	30158	30057	29922	05538	18043	18013	03086
Norway	12453	12416	12350	74570	74460	74270	41555
Portugal	30715	30640	30472	18393	18374	18326	10249
Saudi Arabia	62632	62561	62437	37504	37517	37550	20899
Singapore	26520	26509	26471	15880	15897	15919	08849
South Africa	84543	84853	85672	50505	50865	51523	28144
Spain	25451	25138	25256	15240	15225	15189	84926
Sweden	12955	12934	12862	77576	77504	77359	43230
Switzerland	24391	24661	24614	14964	14909	14803	08339
US	16700			10000			05573

Other Spot Rates

Country	Sterling	Dollar	Country	Sterling	Dollar
Argentina	16700	10000	Oman	06429	03850
Brazil	19130	11449	Pakistan	73564	44050
China	13824	82791	Philippines	66383	39750
Czech Rep	55351	33150	Poland	56609	33898
Egypt	56907	34076	Qatar	60801	36408
Ghana	38535	23075	Russia	102388	61310
Hungary	35235	21093	South Korea	22286	133450
India	66366	39740	Taiwan	55052	32965
Indonesia	136105	81500	Thailand	64462	38600
Kuwait	05103	03056	Turkey	417049	249730
Nigeria	13896	83160	UAE	61339	36730

Interest Rates

UK		Germany		US		Japan	
Base	725%	Discount	250%	Prime	850%	Discount	050%
France		Lombard	450%	Discount	500%	Belgium	
Intervention	330%	Canada		Fed Funds	544%	Discount	275%
Italy		Prime	650%	Spain		Central	330%
Discount	500%	Discount	500%	10-d Repo	450%	Switzerland	
Netherlands		Denmark		Sweden		Discount	100%
SpAdvance	330%	Discount	350%	Repo(Ave)	435%	Lombard	350%

Bond Yields

Country	3 mth	chg	1 yr	chg	2 yr	chg	5 yr	chg	10 yr	chg
Australia	482	-	481	003	503	005	548	005	583	004
Belgium	379	-007	396	-002	431	003	467	004	517	001
Canada	488	000	518	001	514	001	534	001	549	001
ECU	429	000	428	000	426	-001	476	004	516	002
France	000	000	374	-003	418	003	470	003	510	002
Germany	366	000	394	-001	418	005	470	005	504	002
Italy	482	-022	457	-008	458	-004	492	-001	527	000
Japan	047	000	044	000	050	000	105	000	174	000
N'lands	360	-002	394	002	425	003	456	004	509	002
Spain	420	000	412	000	436	001	476	003	521	001
Sweden	456	000	481	002	491	004	510	002	538	002
S'land	148	-001	181	-002	197	-005	245	-001	320	001
UK	695	000	744	000	661	000	611	000	589	000
US	495	-	519	-	570	-8880	579	-	582	-

Money Market Rates

	Overnight Bid	Overnight Offer	1 week Bid	1 week Offer	1 month Bid	1 month Offer	3 months Bid	3 months Offer	6 months Bid	6 months Offer	1 year Bid	1 year Offer
Treasury Bills					710	695	710	695				
LIBOR												
Domestic Depos	725	738	719	731	734	741	738	744	738	744	731	738
Eurosterling Deps	719	731	728	734	734	741	738	744	738	744	731	738
Eligible Bank Bills					722	716	722	716	722	716		
Sterling CDs					739	733	739	733	737	729	730	722
Eurodollar CDs					555		564		567			
ECU Deposits					419	428	416	428	418	428		

www.bloomberg.com/uk Source: Bloomberg

Liffe Financial Futures

Contract		Settlement	High	Low	Est floor volume	Open interest
Long Gilt	Jun-98	10828	10834	10803	7422500	24272100
5 Yr Gilt	Jun-98	10297	10298	10294	33800	980500
German Bund	Jun-98	10642	10649	10626	7293500	15284800
Italian Bond	Jun-98	11810	11818	11792	3890900	11895500
Japan Govt Bd	Jun-98	13130	13134	13130	10000	000
3 Mth Sterling	Jun-98	9257	9258	9257	1094300	17715800
	Sep-98	9274	9278	9272	1589600	11284000
3 Mth Euromark	Jun-98	9626	9629	9624	5727600	39391300
	Sep-98	9610	9615	9609	7139800	39163000
3 Mth Eurolira	Jun-98	9535	9537	9531	3321900	25532700
	Sep-98	9576	9579	9573	2032000	26293100
3 Mth Euroyen	Jun-98	9934	–	–	–	000
3 Mth Euroswiss	Sep-98	9836	9840	9834	781100	6472300
	Jun-98	9816	9819	9812	9388000	3797300
3 Mth ECU	Jun-98	9577	9578	9575	127400	1282800
	Sep-98	9576	9578	9575	38200	1711600
FTSE 100	Jun-98	584700	587800	581000	2285500	15423800

Liffe FTSE 100 Index Option

Settlement Price: 5833.10

Series	May Call	Imp Vol	Put	Imp Vol	Jun Call	Jun Put	Jul Call	Jul Put	Aug Call	Aug Put
5750	109	25	142	28	223	230	290	271	359	313
5800	87	24	171	28	194	262	260	292	330	336
5850	66	23	202	29	169	280	235	318	303	362
5900	49	23	236	31	148	309	213	347	282	392

Energy

* at 5:30pm

Brent Crude($/barrel) IPE	Last*	Chg	Vol	Gas oil($/tonne) IPE	Close	Chg	Vol	WTI Crude($/barrel) NYM	Last*	Chg	Products($/tonne) Spot CIF NW Eur	
Jun	1454	-011	14489	May	13550	075	516	Jun	1567	-010	Gasoline 95	18200
Jul	1485	-010	7753	Jun	13700	075	2717	Jul	1617	-004	Naphtha	13200
Aug	1510	-012	1570	Jul	13925	100	531	Aug	1650	-005	Gasoil	13800
								Sep	1676	-003	Fuel Oil (3.5%)	7200

Commodity Indices

	Base date	Last	Goldman Sachs Chg	%chg	31 Dec	at 5:30pm %chgYTD
Index	1970=100	16603	-021	-013	21526	-2287
Agricultural	1970=100	20643	-128	-062	23123	-1073
Energy	1983=100	5869	-006	-010	8586	-3164
Ind Metals	1977=100	15598	000	000	16879	-759
Livestock	1970=100	16073	099	055	19103	-539
Prec Metals	1973=100	41763	310	075	46354	-990

Industrial Metals

LME ($/tonne)	Cash		Chg	3 month		Chg	LME stocks	Chg
Aluminium HG	14385	14395	-900	1464	1465	-5	519525	-3500
Aluminium Alloy	1302	1307	-500	1330	1331	-4	49520	-20
Copper A	1870	1871	300	1881	1882	4	299325	-3425
Lead	552	553	-900	5685	567	-8	107200	-100
Nickel	5495	5505	1000	5590	5595	10	64572	-336
Tin	5815	5825	-500	5725	5730	0	6470	-75
Zinc	10855	10865	-800	1112	1113	-8	460800	1325

Precious Metals

pm fix/$ per oz		Day's chg	Year's chg	pm fix/£ per oz		Day's chg	Year's chg	Coins ($)		Year's chg
Platinum	40000	-850	2575	Platinum	23975	-545	990	Krugrands	30923	2325
Palladium	36800	-800	21000	Palladium	21935	-340	12160	Sovs	7162	
Silver	631	-003	145	Silver	366	-002	080	Nobles	39455	
Gold	30825	-020	-3100					Maple Leaf	31289	-3312

Agricultural

* at 5:30pm

Cocoa		Coffee		Barley		Potatoes		Lge Potatoes	
LIFFE	£/tonne	LIFFE	$/tonne	LIFFE	£/tonne	LIFFE	£/tonne	SA	$/tbs kg
May98	108100	May98	188000	May98	7400	May98	10200	May98	64400
Jul98	110400	Jul98	181000	Sep98	7350	Jun98	10000	Jun98	64450
Sep98	112200	Sep98	177500	Nov98	7500	Nov98	7600	Apr99	64475
Vol:	0	Vol:	0	Vol:	0	Vol:	0	Vol:	0
White Sugar*		**Freight**		**Wheat**		**Corn***		**Soya Beans***	
LIFFE	$/tonne	LIFFE	$10/pt	LIFFE	$/tonne	CBOT	Cents/bshl	CBOT	$/bshls
Aug98	24520	May98	96500	May98	7700	May98	24450	May98	1900
Oct98	24850	Jun98	94000	Jul98	7890	Jul98	25375	Jul98	2500
Dec98	25490	Jul98	91500	Sep98	7575	Sep98	26075	Aug98	2700
Vol:	0	Vol:	0	Vol:	0	Vol:	0	Vol:	0

Other Softs

at 5:30pm

Jun	Live Cattle	(CME) $/40k lb	6905	Jul	White Maize	(SAF) $/100 mt	66800
May	Pork Bellies	(CME) $/40k lb	5600	May	Rubber	(TCM) Y/5k kg	8710
Jul	Orange Juice	(CTN) $/15k lb	10490	Jul	Cotton	(CTN) $/50k lb	6580
May	Milk	(CSC) $/50k lb	...	Jul	Crude Palm	(KLC) $/25 tn	231900
Jul	Oats	(CBT) $/5k bsh	12850	Jul	Soya Oil	(CBT) $/60k lb	2245
Jul	Flax	(WCE) $/20 tn	...	May	Woollen Yarn	(TCM) $/500kg	125500

Latest Unit Trust Prices

Fund	Sell	Buy	Yld
AIB Govett Trust Ltd			
4 Battle Bridge Lane, London SE1 2HR			
Tel: 0171 378 7979			
American Strategy	24457	26135	000
Asia Pac	6233	6764	169
Cash	960	905	575
European Strategy	7745	8442	000
FTSE Mid 250 Index	11447	12210	159
Geared UK Index	2665	2814	575
Greater China	3350	3268	000
International Growth	18185	19443	311
Japan General	3861	10450	000
Monthly Income	4522	4830	738
Pacific Strategy	9904	10530	000
UK Bear	432	456	525
UK Equity/Safeguard	11222	10003	203
UK Index	1922	2029	525
UK Safeguard	14095	15023	005
UK Smaller Cos	9621	10268	250
US Index	2577	2716	400
AXA Equity & Law Unit Trust Managers			
AXA Equity & Law Hse,			
Corporation St, Coventry CV1 1GD			
Tel: 01203 553231			
Balanced Acc	5114	6601	236
Balanced Inc	7355	7824	236
British Excel	13070	13900	208
BritishIncomeAcc	16700	17700	357
BritishIncomeInc	10560	11233	397
Europe	56430	60130	047
General Acc	96440	102400	223
General Inc	78020	83060	223
Gilt&Fixed Int	9763	10375	576
Gilt&FixedIntAcc	24030	25370	576
Global Opps	12180	14026	022
Higher Inc Acc	124700	132600	419
Higher Inc Inc	62570	66860	419
Japan	2204	3408	000
North American	46220	49170	000
Pacific Basin	27630	29456	227
UK Growth Acc	65040	70140	223
UK Growth Inc	41350	44000	223
Barclays Funds Limited			
11 Broadway, Stratford, London, E15 4BJ			
Customer Help Desk 0181 522 4000			
Balanced Trusts			
Income Funds			
Cash	10150	10050	673
Cash Acc	13390	13390	675
Income	7950	8524	347
Income Builder	9106	9686	405
Balanced Funds			
...	60020	64540	149
Exempt	12120	12930	137
General	46230	42875	182
Property	23490	29480	585
Trustee	32340	34410	111
Growth Funds UK			
Capital	20720	22140	120
FTSE 100	14330	15350	136
Growth Acc	64450	68560	109
Smaller Cos Acc	5362	5819	163
Smaller Cos Inc	6342	7405	163
Growth Funds - Overseas			
America	60350	17535	000
American Growth	17606	16840	000
Japan Acc	9014	9518	000
Japan Inc	8971	9410	000

Fund	Sell	Buy	Yld
Japan Spec Sits	4196	4347	000
Worldwide	23690	25140	047
Barclays Investment Portfolios (1200)F			
High Income Inc	5137	5196	664
Managed Income	5024	5197	648
Mgd Gwth&Income	5031	5330	500
Managed Growth	5201	5635	060
Barclays Global Investors Funds			
PO Box 14828 London E15 4UG			
Brokerline: 0800 731 2443			
Income Funds			
Distribution	14110	14180	457
Equity Income	19220	20500	356
Gilt&FixedIntInc	6480	6706	670
InternatnlFixedInt	9995	10330	462
InternatnlFxdIntAcc	12950	13390	462
Growth Funds - UK			
Gwth & Inc Acc	131100	139630	116
Gwth & Inc Inc	60340	64200	116
UK Growth	59290	63070	113
UK Growth Acc	57290	63070	113
Growth Funds - Overseas			
European Growth	29130	30830	023
EuropeanGwthAcc	31900	33780	022
FarEastern Growth	10960	7860	070
FarEast GwthAcc	18620	19810	070
Baring Fund Managers Ltd			
PO Box 831, 199 Bishopsgate,			
London EC2M 3YS			
Enq: 0171 762 8450, Dealing: 0171 214 1004			
American Growth	20510	21650	000
AmericanSmllrCos	17890	18960	000
Eastern	15850	17000	030
Equity Income	13710	14590	406
European Growth	62650	66570	060
European Select	52170	56870	060
German Growth	16180	17120	050
Global Bond	7472	7859	510
Global Growth	21320	22630	050
Income Plus	5568	5590	690
Japan Growth	10910	11550	000
Japan Sunrise	7916	8353	000
Korea	2874	3132	000
Portfolio Acc	29820	48320	180
Portfolio Inc	13930	21270	180
Select Managers	10530	11290	100
UK Growth	15660	16690	180
UK Growth & Inc	9473	9548	230
UK Smaller Cos	15140	16410	100
Charity Fund			
OverseasGwthEx	8235	8344	010
Friends Provident Unit Trust Managers Ltd			
United Kingdom Hse, Castle St,			
Salisbury, Wiltshire SP1 3SH			
Enq: 01722 715834, Dealing: 01722 715835			
Amer Smaller Cos	27350	29540	000
American	8948	9313	000
American Acc	10030	10650	000
Asian Growth	15980	17040	000
AsianGrowthAcc	16690	17200	000
Australian	43430	46320	000
Australian Acc	49490	52780	000
CapGwthIncAcc	15890	16990	243
CapGwthIncInc	14500	15420	243
Capital Growth	16430	17470	053
Equity Acc	148300	156200	151
Equity Dist	64030	59350	151
EthcalUKEqExAc	14510	14580	243
EthcalUKEqExIn	14160	14530	243

Fund	Sell	Buy	Yld
EuropnGrowthAcc	52100	55570	000
EuropnGrowthDstrb	47550	50720	000
Income	8173	8717	396
Income Acc	30430	32450	398
Instl UK Smlr Cos	14250	14920	117
InstUKSmlrCosAcc	14810	15290	117
International Bond	5689	6020	396
Intl Bond Acc	16520	17480	396
Intl Growth	4939	5268	000
Intl Growth Acc	7281	7766	000
Japan Smaller Cos	16060	17130	000
Monthly Dstrb	9465	10090	453
MonthlyDstrbAcc	18330	19550	453
OpnCptGthIncAcc	18850	17320	292
OpnCptlGrowth	16380	17400	000
OpnCptlGwthIncInc	15110	16070	292
PacificBasinAcc	16490	17580	004
SterlingDepositAcc	12450	12450	645
SterlingDepositInc	10040	10040	645
Stewardship	54820	58260	123
Stwrdshp Acc	69960	74620	123
Stwrdshp Inc	8591	9183	431
Stwrdshp IncAcc	12630	13470	431
Stwrdshp N Am	17700	18880	001
Stwrdshp N AmAcc	19050	20320	001
Tokyo Acc	6209	6622	000
Tokyo Inc	6147	6556	000
UK Focus	5945	6341	108
UK Focus Acc	7471	7969	108
UK Growth	28180	30030	136
UK Growth Acc	58420	62310	136
HSBC Unit Trust Management Ltd			
6 Bevis Marks, London EC3A 7QP			
Advsrs:0800 181890, Invsrs:0800 289505			
Dealing: 0171 955 5055			
Benton Fund	14060	14920	106X
Elm Growth	10710	11500	236
Benton Fund initial charge 5 per cent			
Elm Growth initial charge 5.25 per cent			
Hill Samuel Exempt Umbrella Trust			
European Acc	32420	33650	118
Japan Acc	3150	3278	000
North Amer Acc	37120	38610	043
Pacific Acc	4719	4953	253
Portfolio Acc	10933	11449	227X
UK Equity Acc	43430	45520	202
UKSmrCos Acc	19480	20680	295
Legal & General (UT Managers) Ltd			
Knox Court, 10 Fitzalan Place			
Cardiff CF2 1TL			
Enq: 01222 448412, Dealing: 01222 683512			
http:www.legal-and-general.co.uk			
Cash	6233	6383	673X
Equity Acc	177600	177830	171X
Equity Dstrb	93550	63560	171X
Equity Income	13631	13630	403X
European	21930	21305	065X
European Index	14030	14030	082Y
Far Eastern	15680	15680	000
Fixed Interest	6055	6055	695X
Gilt	9998	9998	579X
Global Growth	9327	9327	006
International Bond	4603	4803	489X
Japan Index	3463	3463	034
Japanese	4948	4948	000
Nth American	31740	31740	007X
Pacific Growth	7778	7778	135X
Pacific Index	2062	3462	320X

Fund	Sell	Buy	Yld
UK Index	10900	10930	222X
UK Index Acc	11130	11130	222X
UK Recovery	15800	15800	104X
UK Smaller Cos	21210	21210	094
UK StkMarketAcc	10770	10770	030
UK Tactical	9303	9303	665X
US Index	12610	12610	053
Worldwide	12580	12580	100X
Worldwide Acc	12080	12080	100X
Lloyds Bank Unit Trust Managers Ltd			

Fund	Sell	Buy	Yld
Mountbatten House, Chatham			
Kent, ME4 4JF			
Tel: 01634 836000, Dealing: 01634 834313			
Balanced	58030	61740	185
Balanced Acc	141100	150200	185
ContEurGwthAcc	12830	13300	008
ContEurpeGwth	11670	12290	008
Extra Income	40740	43250	345
Extra Inc Acc	117300	124800	346
FTSE 100	18030	19190	175
FTSE 100 Acc	19210	20440	175

Fund	Sell	Buy	Yld
German Growth	21730	22860	000X
GermanGwthAcc	22770	23970	000
Growth Portfolio	88280	93820	036X
Growth Pfolio Acc	92870	98910	036
High Interest	11270	11680	637X
High Int Acc	13020	13500	637
High Reserve	13490	14380	471
HighReserveAcc	15780	16770	471
Income Portfolio	73580	78280	357X
Income Pfolio Acc	87540	93130	357
Income	78900	83840	308X
Income Acc	234500	249500	308
Japan Growth	7178	7837	000X
Japan Growth Acc	7203	7863	000
MasterTrust	8844	9186	118
MasterTrust Acc	10150	10800	118
Millennium	13380	14220	184
NAmSmCo&RecAcc	25340	26960	000
NAmSmCo&RecInc	24820	26410	000X
NthAmer&Gen	35610	37890	000
NthAmer&GenAcc	41210	43850	000
Pacific Basin	16070	17100	080
PacificBasinAcc	17320	18430	080
Premier Exempt	22580	23570	247
Safety First	12460	13120	123
SmlrCos&Rcvry	61320	64650	181X
SmlrCos&RecAcc	86710	91280	181
UK Equity Income	18580	19750	308X
UK Equity Growth	23380	24880	196
UK Growth	15040	16000	146
UK Growth Acc	19270	20510	145
WorldwideGrowth	45240	48130	047
W'wideGrowthAcc	66960	71240	047
Newton Fund Managers Ltd			
2 Festival Square, Edinburgh EH3 9SU			
Clients 0800 614330, Broker 0500 660000,			
Dealing, 0500 440000			
Internet: information@newton.co.uk			
Amer Growth Acc	7700	8191	000
Amer Growth Inc	7641	8128	000
Bridge	13175	14015	192
Cash Acc	7444	7444	683
Cash Inc	5133	5133	889
Distributor	14850	15808	189
European	9688	10306	706
ExemptIndexLinkedGilt	10290	10300	226
Foundation	15017	15975	079
Growth Acc	20199	21486	078
Growth Inc	19280	20489	078
Higher Inc Acc	6253	6652	387
Higher Income	4843	5152	387
High Yield Bond	10119	10561	704
Income	39852	42395	186
International Bond	13645	14484	457
Intl Growth	4834	5142	000
Japan	2325	2473	000
Managed Acc	29692	31587	089
Managed Inc	28982	30821	089
Oriental	11110	11818	035
Oriental Acc	11518	12253	035
Northern Rock Unit Trusts Ltd			
Bulman House, Regent Centre Gosforth			
Newcastle upon Tyne NE3 3NG;			
Tel: (0191) 285 2555			
High Income	6178	6538	494X
UK Growth	15320	16230	222
Prudential Unit Trusts Ltd			
51-59 Ilford Hill, Ilford, Essex, IG1 2DL			

Fund	Sell	Buy	Yld
IFA Dealing 0345 835585			
Client Dealing 0345 835500			
Cash Haven	10192	10242	625
Cash Haven Acc	12742	12805	625
Distribution Acc	15698	16287	433
Distribution Inc	12900	13378	433X
Equity	122500	130318	144X
Equity Income	11876	13421	357
European	41899	43439	020
Global Growth	13075	13810	137
High Income	11598	12338	411X
Intl Growth	25833	27482	084
Intl Small Cos	10890	11585	084X
Japanese	11683	12107	000
Managed	5418	5815	178
Managed Inc	5185	5341	708X
Nth American	34721	35932	058
Pacific Mkts	8040	8332	182
Premier Inc	5107	5315	570X
Small Cos	13411	14267	168X
Special Sits	16944	18026	167
UK Growth	20793	22120	146
Save & Prosper Securities Ltd			
16-22 WesternRd; Romford, Essex RM1 3LB			
Clients: 0800 829 100			
Brokerline: 0800 727 770			
Amer Smaller Cos	19480	20720	000
Cash	14860	14860	695X
China Dragon	5682	6045	042
Commodity	11750	12510	000
Emerging Markets	4069	4329	039
European Growth	36750	39100	000
Eurpn Smaller Cos	10010	10650	000
Extra Income	7306	7571	475
Far Eastern Gwth	7080	7532	000
FarEastrnSmlCos	3557	3784	030
Financial Secs	49230	52370	073
Gold & Exploratn	4184	4430	000
Growth	62270	62580	041
High Income	5456	5456	705
International Bond	15650	18140	512X
ITU	29270	31140	050X
Japan Growth	11340	12050	000
Japan Smaller Cos	9572	10180	000X
Korea	1898	2019	000
Latin America	5019	5339	037
Masterfund	8183	8224	076
New Europe	5681	(Mid)	000
PremierEquityInc	51490	54780	342
PremierEquityGwth	24670	26240	081
S E Asia Growth	3000	3191	073
Southern Africa	5682	5017	072
UK & Overseas	25520	27150	062
UK Equity Inc	36520	38350	334
UKEquityGwth	12110	12580	085X
UKEquityGwthAInc	43470	46240	222
UK Smaller Cos	7788	8285	018
US Growth	31520	33530	000
Scottish Amicable Pension Funds			
PO Box 14962 Craigforth Stirling, FK9 4ZD			
01786 448844			
95%SafeguardPens	11380	(Mid)	000
100%SafeguardPens	10510	(Mid)	000
WealthPresrvnCap	11940	(Mid)	000
WealthPresrvnInc	13150	(Mid)	000
Singer & Friedlander Inv Funds Ltd			
21 New Street, London EC2M 4HR			
Tel: 0171 867 8777, Dealing: 0171 626 6226			

Fund	Sell	Buy	Yld
***SIB Recognised Dublin OEIC Funds**			
American Growth	18829	(Mid)	000
Aztec	8121	(Mid)	000
Corporate Income	10709	(Mid)	000
Deutschmark Res	9829	(Mid)	000
European	24515	(Mid)	000
Football Fund	8373	(Mid)	000
Global Bond	8875	(Mid)	000
Investment Trust	13761	(Mid)	000
ReserveRollUpFund	13489	(Mid)	000
Samurai	3310	(Mid)	000
Sterling Reserve	13063	(Mid)	000
Tai Pan	7767	(Mid)	000
UK Emerg Leaders	10730	(Mid)	000
UK Equity Income	12191	(Mid)	000
UK Growth	14039	(Mid)	000
Singer & Friedlander Unit Mgrs Ltd			
Continent	13950	14700	060
Global Growth	10220	10783	050X
InvestmtTrustPfolio	7286	7751	180
Lugano	11430	12460	150X
Managed Ex	170810	178429	212
Preferred Inc	11630	12373	630X
Smaller Cos	33010	35110	090
Standard Life Unit Trusts			
30 Lothian Rd, Edinburgh EH1 2DH			
Tel: 0800 33 33 53			
GlobalAdvntge	5780	5809	133
GlobalAdvntgeAcc	6365	6397	131
IncAdvntgeAcc	6099	6129	264X
IncAdvntgeInc	4992	5017	264X
Managed Acc	7876	8456	156
Premier Income	5462	5654	596X
Premier Inc Acc	6367	6554	526X
UKEqtyGwthAcc	15000	15910	075
UKEqtyHighIncInc	5787	6123	310X
UKEqtyHighIncAcc	9122	9610	316X
UKEthicalAcc	5257	5442	103
UKSmrCosAcc	7119	7547	045
Virgin Direct			
Discovery House, Whiting Road, Norwich			
Tel: 0345 95 95 95			
Email: mail@virgin-direct.co.uk			
Pen Growth Acc	14512	14512	0
Pen Inc Protector	11806	11806	0
PFS Income	11338	11339	651
PFS UKIndexTracking	18470	19417	124

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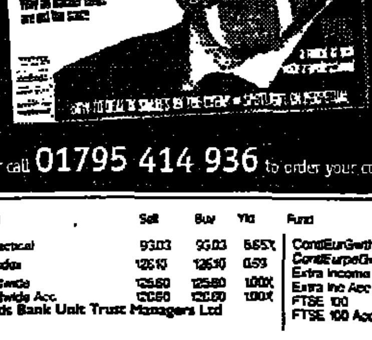

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هكذا من الأهل

Speedfit trainer is quick on the uptake

Outsiders tilt at the Guineas double. Richard Edmondson reports

THREE years ago George Margarson was driving horseboxes around the country but now he stands on the verge of a Guineas double.

It is, admittedly, just about the widest brink any one in racing has had to cross. Margarson's Jay Gee is 200-1 for Sunday's 1,000 Guineas, while his colt Speedfit Too was yesterday trading at 150-1 for the colts' equivalent with Victor Chandler. "But we took all that about him this morning and his price will be dropping," Margarson said yesterday. "I asked him if he'd give first four but he refused."

Speedfit Too is not running just so connections can take some old chums and a hamper to the races on Saturday (that's Jay Gee's mission the following day). Both are the property of John Guest, a businessman who was probably warned initially that ownership was not always a series of triumphs. It was a reality that quickly rushed up to him. "His first horse was the orginal Speedfit, a lovely Mystiko colt," Margarson said. "But he died of grass sickness, one of only two in Newmarket in 30 years to have died from that."

Speedfit Too is an improvement if only for the fact that he can provide a pulse. However, he is also quite useful for an animal which cost just 17,000 guineas at the sales. As a two-year-old he won at Windsor and on Newmarket's July course, and was also a respectful third to Xaar in the Prix de la Salamandre. On his reappearance in the Free Handicap, Speedfit Too was fifth on going too soft for him. "For me he should be a 33-1 shot," Margarson added. "He's got better form than half those other ones ahead of him [in the market]."

George Margarson is 45 and has toiled for many years in racing's vast background. It would be fair to say the sound of popping champagne bottles still startles him. Margarson started turf life as a Flat apprentice with Harry Wharton and then moved to Gunner B's first supervisor, Geoff Toft. He easily remembers how many winners he rode on the Flat (zero).

When the puddings started having their effect he graduated to National Hunt competition and did at least manage four winners in that sphere from about 200 rides. As he entered his fourth decade, though, he retired himself. "I stopped when I was 30 because you start hitting the ground a bit too hard then," he said.

Since that watershed he has spent 15 years assisting Mick Ryan, who was also assisted by the arrival of animals such as Katies and Royal Heroine in the yard when Margarson was around. But when the traffic jams started stretching back from the racecourse to the bottom of the stable drive, Margarson decided his days behind the horsebox wheel were over.

Three years ago he started leasing part of Tony Hide's Machell Place stables on Newmarket's Old Station Road, 20 yards from the bottom of the Heath. The premises are among the safest in Suffolk, guarded as they are by Margarson's vociferous Manchester terriers.

The trainer has made quite a noise himself in his fledgeling career and is rather proud of the way it is going. "I'm brilliant getting these horses to the Guineas, aren't I?" he said. "It's not bad considering I've got only five three-year-olds. It's a doddle this training. I should have done it years ago."

George's confidence will have been sent soaring even further yesterday following the news that the ground at Headquarters was firming up for his horse. Newmarket yesterday enjoyed its first dry day of the month and the good going is now considered ideal for Speedfit Too. Victor Chandler was warned yesterday. Now you have been.

RICHARD EDMONDSON
NAP: Action Jackson (Brighton 3.00)
NB: *Signs And Wonders* (Brighton 4.30)

Maguire's fracture turns into summer break

ADRIAN MAGUIRE is likely to be out of action for the rest of the jumps season after medical consultations yesterday found that he had refractured the collarbone he broke at Cheltenham last month when falling at Ascot on Tuesday.

"It is not a complicated break," Maguire said, "but I will be out for at least three weeks. That virtually rules me out until the end of the season.

"I needed only seven more winners to reach 100 but realistically that is not possible now. But I will be back riding in the summer. It could have been worse. At least I was able to come back and salvage the last two big races of the season."

Maguire has been bit by injury since he rode 194 winners in the 1994/95 season, just missing out on the jockeys' title. His tallies in the last two campaigns were just 60 and 81 victories.

Punchestown

INSPECTION: 7.30am

3.15 HEINEKEN GOLD CUP NOVICE H'CAP CHASE (GRADE 1) £60,000 3m 1f

1 1121 BOSS DOYLE (27) (D) M Morris 6 12 0 ... A P McCoy
2 -12PP FIDDLING THE FACTS (27) N Henderson (GB) 7 11 0 ... M Fitzgerald
3 P5231 MAHLER (14) N Twiston-Davies(UK) 8 10 12 (12oh) ... C Llewellyn
4 21202 DELPHI LODGE (2) (BF) T Taaffe 8 10 9 (9ex) ... J F Titley
5 511233 BAVARD JET (16) E Bolger 6 10 7 ... K Whelan
6 1P2156 ETON GALE (17) N Meade 9 10 7 ... P Carberry
7 211U3F GLEBE LAD (16) (C) M J O'Brien 6 10 7 ... R Dunwoody
8 62121 LIVER BIRD (18) J A Berry 8 10 7 ... C O'Dwyer
9 221281 LUCKY TOWN (12) E Bolger 7 10 7 (6ex) ... D J Casey
10 51U310 MISS ORCHESTRA (17) Mrs J Harrington 7 10 7 ... B J Geraghty
11 -0U55P MOUNT DRUID (11) J Roche 8 10 7 ... T J Murphy
12 -3FF33 PAULS RUN (53) W Lanigan 9 10 7 ... L P Cusack
13 0P1336 RHYTHM SECTION (15) J Scott 9 10 7 ... N Williamson
14 2-2432 TARTHOOTH (33) (BF) A L Moore 7 10 7 ... T P Treacy
15 423205 TONI'S TIP (16) W Burke 6 10 7 ... S H O'Donovan
– 15 declared –
BETTING: 9-4 Boss Doyle, 7-1 Mahler, Liver Bird, 8-1 Eton Gale, Lucky Town, 10-1 Fiddling The Facts, Delphi Lodge, Miss Orchestra, 12-1 others

3.50 IAWS CHAMPION FOUR-YEAR-OLD HURDLE (GRADE 1) £50,000 4YO 2m

1 2103 DARAPOUR (17) (D) (BF) A P O'Brien 11 0 ... C F Swan
2 104 DAYBREAK EXPRESS (F17) (D) T Taaffe 11 0 ... N Williamson
3 003434 EN-JAY-BEE (17) G Lyons 11 0 ... P Carberry
4 11 EXECUTIVE DECISION (67) (D) M Grassick 11 0 ... P L Malone
5 11 FLAGSHIP UBERALLES (39) (D) P Flynn 11 0 ... A P McCoy
6 122P KHAIRABAR (28) (D) C Roche 11 0 ... C O'Dwyer
7 6113 NOMADIC (42) (D) N Meade 11 0 ... R Dunwoody
8 0444 PATRIOT GAMES (26) (D) A P O'Brien 11 0 ... F M Berry
9 1 RUNAWAY RENEGADE (11) (D) R Hurley 11 0 ... T P Treacy
10 1141 SAD MAD BAD (61) (D) Mrs M Reveley (GB) 11 0 ... P Niven
11 000 SHALFORD SPRINGS (5) P Sinnott 11 0 ... B M Cash
12 053381 SHANTARINI (17) (D) S Donohoe 11 0 ... K P Gaule
13 54 THATS LOGIC (F11) D Hassett 11 0 ... M A Fitzgerald
14 1114 ZAFARABAD (42) (D) (BF) O Nicholson (GB) 11 0 ... R Johnson
15 21U305 HAMAMELIS (17) (D) M J O'Brien 10 9 ... J F Titley
16 123 KEEPING THE FAITH (125) (D) T Carmody 10 9 ... G Bradley
– 16 declared –
BETTING: 7-2 Zafarabad, 4-1 Nomadic, 7-1 Darapour, 8-1 Executive Decision, Flagship Uberalles, 12-1 Sad Mad Bad, 14-1 others

4.25 BALLYMORE CHAMPION STAYERS HURDLE (GRADE 1) £40,000 added 3m

1 21410 BUCKHOUSE BOY (42) (D) D Nicholson (GB) 8 11 11 ... R Johnson
2 13340 DERRYMOYLE (17) (CD) M Cunningham 9 12 0 ... A P McCoy
3 -2525 PADDY'S RETURN (42) (CD) F Murphy (GB) 6 12 0 ... N Williamson
4 1-2106 COMMANCHE COURT (42) (C) T Walsh 5 11 12 ... Mr R Walsh
5 6300-F DIFFICULT TIMES (17) (D) G Lyons 6 11 11 ... P Carberry
6 143332 MOSCOW EXPRESS (39) (C BF) A P O'Brien 6 11 11 ... C Swan
7 F1422 BRACKENHEATH (27) (D) D Grissell (GB) 7 11 8 ... R Dunwoody
8 041200 ONEOFOUROWN (5) (D) S Donohoe 7 11 8 ... K P Gaule
9 1F211 GENEROSA (15) J Hassett 5 11 1 ...
– 9 declared –
BETTING: 2-1 Paddy's Return, 3-1 Commanche Court, 7-1 Moscow Express, Generosa, Buckhouse Boy, Brackenheath, 10-1 Derrymoyle, 25-1 others

Redcar

HYPERION
2.10 WESTWOOD VIEW (nap) 2.40 Happy Wanderer 3.10 One To Go 3.40 Riccarton 4.10 Pass The Rest 4.40 Jennelle (nb)

GOING: Soft (Heavy patches in back straight). STALLS: Straight – centre; rest – inside. DRAW ADVANTAGE: High from 5f to 1m.
● Course is off A1085. Station 300yd. ADMISSION: Club £14; Paddock £9 (OAPs £4.50); Course £3 (OAPs £1.50). CAR PARK: Free.
● LEADING TRAINERS: Mrs M Reveley 31-275 (11.3%), M Johnston 15-126 (11.9%), J Berry 12-121 (9.9%), J L Eyre 11-98 (11.2%).
● LEADING JOCKEYS: K Darley 42-232 (18.1%), J Fortune 13-159 (8.2%), L Charnock 12-164 (7.3%), Dean McKeown 11-131 (8.4%).
● FAVOURITES: 201 wins from 559 races (36%).
BLINKERED FIRST TIME: Charlie's Gold (4.10), Rimus Magic (3.10).
LONG DISTANCE RUNNER: Lawless Bridget (4.10) sent 260 miles.

2.10 MIDDLETON TYAS AUCTION STAKES (CLASS E) £3,750 added 2YO 5f

1 DISPOL PRESIDENT P Calver 8 8 ... K Darley 15
2 ROLLING RIO P Haslam 8 8 ... C Lowther (3) 11
3 THE HAULIER T Easterby 8 8 ... L Charnock 1
4 3 WESTWOOD VIEW (13) J J Quinn 8 7 ... J Fortune 2
5 6 BOB'S BUSTER (23) J L Harris 8 5 ... Dean McKeown 10
6 0 BODFARI KOMAITE (22) M W Easterby 8 5 ... T Lucas 7
7 BODFARI SIGNET M W Easterby 8 5 ... S Finnamore (7) 9
8 SHARP EDGE BOY E Alston 8 5 ... A Culhane 5
9 OTTERINGTON GIRL Miss S Hall 8 3 ... Dale Gibson 12
10 REBECCA JAY M Meagher 8 3 ... M Fenton 4
11 2 ANGIE BABY (21) J Berry 8 0 ... S Maloney 14
12 3 BAYARD LADY (31) D Moffatt 8 0 ... Darren Moffatt (3) 8
13 22 COLLEGE MUSIC (14) (BF) M Brittain 8 0 ... D Mernagh (7) 6
14 0 GYPSY MUSIC (33) G Oldroyd 8 0 ... P Fitzsimons (7) 3
15 THREE GREEN LEAVES M Johnston 8 0 ... J Fanning 13
– 15 declared –
BETTING: 3-1 Westwood View, 7-2 Angie Baby, 5-1 College Music, Three Green Leaves, 8-1 Bayard Lady, 14-1 Dispol President, 20-1 others

2.40 NAWTON APPRENTICES MAIDEN HANDICAP (CLASS G) £2,500 1m 1f

1 -43550 BARITONE (12) S Kettlewell 4 10 0 ... P Fitzsimons 12
2 3005-6 SMART SPIRIT (28) (BF) Mrs M Reveley 4 9 9 ... J Bosley 11
3 32-032 IMPETUS (3) J Hetherton 4 8 9 ... Carolyn Bales 3
4 000-52 WARNING REEF (18) E Alston 5 9 5 ... Melanie Worden (5) 9
5 005- THE MUNRO'S (198) J Goldie 4 9 5 ... J McAuley 14
6 20-000 CHIEF'S SPIRIT (29) S Kettlewell 4 9 4 ... I Grantham 10
7 0-3364 HAPPY WANDERER (12) P Haslam 3 9 1 ... P Goode (3) 15
8 320-06 GADROON (31) P Haslam 4 8 12 ... Jenny Benson 2
9 6-2000 BLUE HOPPER (7) M Quinn 4 8 11 ... Joanna Badger (6) 7
10 44/060 DALERIVER (29) R Bastiman 7 8 10 ... C Cogan 6
11 060-22 PRINCE NICHOLAS (22) K Hogg 3 8 7 ... R Smith 16
12 00250- SERAPE (J143) M Pelt 5 8 5 ... S Buckley 8
13 505- INTUITIVE (211) J L Eyre 3 8 3 ... Joanna Davies (6) 1
14 00-662 ARDLEIGH CHARMER (9) C Dwyer 3 8 1 ... J Gotobed (3) 13
15 00-006 DISTANT KING (3) G Kelly 5 8 1 ... D Egan (5) 4
16 03006- YOUR THE LIMIT (143) J Parkes 5 7 12 ... S Finnamore 5
– 16 declared –
BETTING: 3-1 Prince Nicholas, 6-1 Smart Spirit, Impetus, Ardleigh Charmer, 7-1 Warning Reef, 12-1 Happy Wanderer, Your The Limit, 16-1 others

3.10 ARKSEY SELLING STAKES (CLASS F) £3,000 added 7f

1 00-221 BIRCHWOOD SUN (8) (C) (D) M Dods 8 9 9 ... K Darley 7 V
2 -3345- SCATHEBURY (21) (D) (BF) K Burke 5 9 9 ... J Fortune 3
3 5/0 CARIAD CYMRU (21) J Spearing 4 9 4 ... S Righton (7) 9
4 000-0 GENERAL HASTIE (24) C Thornton 4 9 4 ... Dean McKeown 8
5 6550-0 HANBY (26) J Goldie 6 9 4 ... A Culhane 6
6 00-004 OUR PEOPLE (3) M Johnston 4 9 4 ... D Holland 4
7 00-000 RIMUS MAGIC (8) E Alston 5 9 4 ... C Lowther (3) 2 V
8 50000- RUNNING GREEN (175) D Moffatt 7 9 4 ... Darren Moffatt (3) 11 V
9 0-0004 TAKE NOTICE (24) M Wane 5 9 4 ... L Charnock 5
10 EMERALD CLUSTER A Smith 4 8 13 ... Dale Gibson 10
11 0042-4 ONE TO GO (31) (BF) J Berry 3 8 5 ... P Bradley (7) 1
– 11 declared –
BETTING: 3-1 One To Go, 4-1 Our People, 9-2 Birchwood Sun, Running Green, 8-1 Scathebury, 10-1 Take Notice, 14-1 Hanby, 25-1 others

3.40 PAT PHOENIX HANDICAP (CLASS E) £3,750 added 1m 3f

1 331-56 DOC RYAN'S (12) M Ryan 4 9 10 ... P McCabe (3) 6 B
2 65-563 AMBIDEXTROUS (J49) (D) E Alston 8 9 3 ... C Lowther (3) 10
3 4655 HILLS GAMBLE (33) P Bevan 8 8 1 ... Dean McKeown 7
4 -00233 GOLDEN ACE (12) R Spicer 5 8 13 ... J Fortune 9
5 06545- MURCHAN TYNE (234) E Alston 5 8 12 ... G Duffield 8
6 5563- RICCARTON (186) P Calver 5 8 12 ... K Darley 3
7 00043- NEWBRIDGE BOY (J37) M Meagher 5 8 7 ... M Fenton 5
8 003-02 BROCTUNE LINE (J12) (D) Mrs M Reveley 4 8 1 ... A Culhane 1
9 0000-0 MAREMMA (30) (CD) Enrico Incisa 4 7 10 ... Kim Tinkler 2
10 0000- MAKATI (269) Miss J A Camacho 4 7 10 ... L Charnock 4
– 10 declared –
Minimum weight: 7st 10lb. True handicap weights: Makati 7st 3lb.
BETTING: 7-2 Broctune Line, 6-1 Golden Ace, Riccarton, 7-1 Ambidextrous, Doc Ryan's, Murchan Tyne, Newbridge Boy, 10-1 others

4.10 SEDBERGH MEDIAN AUCTION MAIDEN STAKES (CLASS E) £3,750 3YO 7f

1 040- ARAB GOLD (192) Miss S Hall 9 0 ... A McGlone 11
2 30-5 BODFARI PRIDE (14) A Bailey 9 0 ... D Wright 8
3 0-00 CHAIRMANOFTHEBOARD (17) R Craggs 9 0 ... L Charnock 2
4 00- CHARLIE'S GOLD (180) A Kelleway 9 0 ... G Duffield 7 B
5 0332-2 CIRCUITEER (23) J Berry 9 0 ... C Lowther (3) 5
6 830- NAJJAR (227) J FitzGerald 9 0 ... Benedichte Halvorsen (5) 4
7 234- PASS THE REST (174) J Noseda 9 0 ... D Holland 1
8 0 THE PEDALER ROCHE (30) R Craggs 9 0 ... Dale Gibson 6
9 00- TIME TO HUNT (222) B Murray 9 0 ... J Fanning 9
10 BERL'S GIFT Mrs M Reveley 8 9 ... A Culhane 3
11 5-4 LAWLESS BRIDGET (13) M Meade 8 9 ... R Havlin (3) 10
– 11 declared –
BETTING: 5-4 Pass The Rest, 13-2 Bodfari Pride, 7-1 Najjar, 8-1 Circuiteer, Lawless Bridget, 12-1 Arab Gold, Berl's Gift, 16-1 others

4.40 CLIFTON WOOD HANDICAP (CLASS D) fillies £5,000 added 5f

1 000-42 JENNELLE (13) (D) (BF) C Dwyer 4 10 0 ... D Holland 1
2 00R1-4 ARJAN (12) (D) J Berry 3 9 0 ... C Lowther (3) 3
3 5214-0 POLLY GOLIGHTLY (12) (D) M Blanshard 5 8 11 ... Dale Gibson 6 B
4 336-03 D'MARTI (7) C Booth 3 8 10 ... A Culhane 4
5 454-00 GOLD EDGE (6) Enrico Incisa 4 8 5 ... Kim Tinkler 5
6 00020- L A TOUCH (264) J J Quinn 5 7 10 ... B Byrnes (7) 2
– 6 declared –
Minimum weight: 7st 10lb. True handicap weights: L A Touch 7st 2lb.
BETTING: 9-4 Arjan, 5-2 Jennelle, 7-2 D'Marti, 9-2 Polly Golightly, 8-1 Gold Edge, 16-1 L A Touch

Wolverhampton

HYPERION
2.20 Sydney Safehands 2.50 Italian Symphony 3.20 Muja's Magic 3.50 Junior Muffin 4.20 Blue Kite 4.50 Arctic Star 5.20 Operatic

GOING: Standard. STALLS: All races – inside.
DRAW ADVANTAGE: High from 6f to 1m 4f.
● Fibresand surface; left-hand course.
● Course is SE of town on B2026. ADMISSION: Club £15; Tattersalls £6 (OAPs £4); Restaurant £29.50 including meal. CAR PARK: Free.
● LEADING TRAINERS: R Hollinshead 68-642 (10.6%), M Johnston 59-264 (22.3%), J Berry 46-319 (15%), P Evans 34-359 (9.5%).
● LEADING JOCKEYS: J Weaver 65-302 (21.5%), G Carter 34-233 (14.6%), J Quinn 23-437 (5.4%), F Lynch 27-270 (10%).
● FAVOURITES: 415 wins from 1,284 races (32.3%).
BLINKERED FIRST TIME: Ivy Bird (4.50), Rude Awakening (visored, 4.20), Spice Girl (visored, 4.50), Silver Hope (visored, 5.20).

2.20 SLOANE MAIDEN AUCTION STAKES (CLASS F) £30,000 2YO 5f

1 SYDNEY SAFEHANDS N Littmoden 8 7 ... J Weaver 6
2 4 JACKIE'S BABY (10) W G M Turner 8 5 ... T Sprake 1
3 2 TO THE LAST MAN (5) M Usher 8 5 ... J Marshall 3
4 JUST ORANGE P Evans 8 3 ... J F Egan 7
5 2 MAMMAS F-C (12) J Berry 8 2 ... G Carter 8
6 BROOKHEAD BRANDY P Evans 8 0 ... N Adams 2
7 ROTOSTAR P Evans 8 0 ... R Mullen (3) 13
8 ACURIA Mrs P Dutfield 7 12 ... J Quinn 11
9 CRASH CALL LADY C Allen 7 12 ... N Carlisle 12
10 GO SALLY GO R Craggs 7 12 ... A Whelan 10
11 MISS TAKE P Evans 7 12 ... A McCarthy (3) 5
12 MY MOTHER'S DREAM M A Buckley 7 12 ... A Mackay 9
13 SUPER STRIDES C Fairhurst 7 12 ... Martin Dwyer 4
– 13 declared –
BETTING: 5-2 Mammas F-C, 4-1 Jackie's Baby, 5-1 To The Last Man, 8-1 Rotostar, 12-1 Sydney Safehands, Just Orange, 14-1 others

2.50 GROSVENOR AMATEURS CLAIMING STAKES (CLASS G) (DIV I) £2,500 6f

1 1362 ITALIAN SYMPHONY (12) (CD) P Evans 4 11 12 Mr A Evans (5) 5 V
2 00452- MY SALTARELLO (278) A Mulholland 4 11 5 ... Mr R Wylie (7) 8
3 00-213 BLUSHING GRENADIER (19)(CD) M Fetherston-Godley 6 11 4 ... Miss E Ramsden 1 V
4 006506 BOFFY (12) (C) (D) B Baugh 5 11 2 ... Mr C Wasson (7) 9
5 36000- BACKHANDER (215) M Wang 6 11 0 ... Mrs C Dunwoody (7) 3
6 600-00 CAPTAIN CARAT (6) (D) D Chapman 7 10 12 ... Miss R Clark 7 B
7 00335/ FIGHTER SQUADRON (635) (D) R Peacock 9 10 12 ... Mrs C Peacock (5) 6 B
8 0-000 APRIL JACKSON (69) P Dalton 4 10 11 ... Mr S Harrison (7) 10
9 0000-0 DETROIT CITY (12) J Berry 3 10 7 ... Miss B Kendall (7) 11
10 45/344 MISS SKYE (31) B Pearce 3 10 7 ... Mrs S Colville (7) 2
11 10-530 ROCKETTE (44) R Jukes 3 9 11 ... Miss E M Jones (7) 4
– 11 declared –
BETTING: 6-4 Italian Symphony, 9-4 Blushing Grenadier, 12-1 Boffy, Captain Carat, Detroit City, Miss Skye, 16-1 My Saltarello, 20-1 others

3.20 MAYFAIR HANDICAP (CLASS D) £5,000 3YO fillies 6f

1 10304- DEMOLITION JO (180) (D) P Evans 9 7 ... A McCarthy (3) 10
2 62233- SUMMER DEAL (160) P Cole 9 6 ... David O'Neill (7) 7
3 3520- KATE LANE (243) Mrs P Dutfield 9 2 ... J Quinn 8
4 3560-4 ROYAL DREAM (41) (D) J Berry 9 1 ... P Fessey (3) 5
5 -1341 SORRIDAR (31) (CD) J L Eyre 8 13 ... O Pears 6
6 4063 SKY RED (30) M Bell 8 8 ... R Mullen (3) 1
7 215435- HEAVENLY ABSTONE (14) P Evans 8 3 ... J F Egan 2 V
8 10-235 MUJA'S MAGIC (98) (D) K Ivory 8 3 ... N Adams 4
9 -5521 MISS DANGEROUS (23) (C) M Quinn 7 10 ... A Whelan 9
10 030-03 PERSIAN FORTUNE (10) W G M Turner 7 10 ... Martin Dwyer 3
– 10 declared –
BETTING: 2-1 Sorridar, 5-1 Summer Deal, 7-1 Demolition Jo, 8-1 Royal Dream, Sky Red, Muja's Magic, 10-1 Heavenly Abstone, 12-1 others

3.50 GROSVENOR AMATEURS CLAIMING STAKES (CLASS G) (DIV II) £2,500 6f

1 542605 RAMSEY HOPE (28) (CD) C Fairhurst 5 11 12 ... Mrs S Bosley 8 V
2 38500- BASHFUL BRAVE (143) (D) B Baugh 7 11 4 ... Miss S M Potts (7) 5
3 00-100 SEANCHAI (76) (CD) P Felgate 5 11 4 ... Mr J Crowley (3) 1
4 -84040 DESERT INVADER (14) (CD) D Chapman 7 11 2 ... Miss R Clark 6
5 00U3-4 ROWLANDSONS STUD (30) (D) K Comerford 5 11 1 ... Mr K R O'Ryan (3) 10
6 -30564 LITTLE IBNR (26) (CD) P Evans 7 10 12 ... Mr A Evans (5) 2 B
7 DANNI (J90) J L Harris 5 10 11 ... Mr B Saunders (7) 3
8 0-2601 JUNIOR MUFFIN (2) (D) J Berry 3 10 11 ... Miss B Kendall (7) 9
9 005-04 OKAY BABY (23) J M Bradley 6 10 9 ... Miss C Bryan (7) 4
10 00000- MARGARET'S DANCER (233) J L Eyre 3 10 7 ... Miss D Jones 7
– 10 declared –
BETTING: 3-1 Ramsey Hope, 9-2 Desert Invader, 5-1 Little Ibnr, 6-1 Junior Muffin, 7-1 Rowlandsons Stud, 8-1 Seanchai, 10-1 others

4.20 49'S ALLIED IRISH BANK GB HANDICAP (CLASS C) £10,000 5f

1 6600-0 KING OF PERU (8) N Littmoden 5 9 12 ... J Weaver 9
2 122303 DOUBLE OSCAR (13) (D) D Nicholls 5 9 4 ... Alex Greaves 10 B
3 00220- ZUHAIR (173) (C) D McCain 5 9 3 ... P Fessey (3) 1
4 052-04 MALIBU MAN (13) (CD) E Wheeler 6 9 0 ... S Carson (7) 3
5 04-110 JUWWI (8) (CD) J M Bradley 4 8 13 ... S Drowne 6
6 320-00 SQUIRE CORRIE (12) (CD) D Chapman 6 8 11 ... J Carroll 12
7 0006-1 DAAWE (USA) (13) (D) J Glover 7 8 9 ... S D Williams 8 V
8 40000- KIRA (174) (CD) J L Eyre 8 8 5 ... R Lappin 2
9 6105-5 BLUE KITE (47) (CD) N Littmoden 3 8 4 ... A McCarthy (3) 5
10 3548 FEATHERSTONE LANE (18) (CD) Miss L Siddall 7 8 3 ... J F Egan 11
11 0111-0 BLISS (19) (D) Mrs P Dutfield 3 8 1 ... J Quinn 13
12 -405031 IVORY'S GRAB HIRE (12) (CD) K Ivory 5 7 10 ... Martin Dwyer 4 B
13 130326 RUDE AWAKENING (18) (D) C Fairhurst 4 7 10 ... A Whelan 7 V
– 13 declared –
Minimum weight: 7st 10lb. True handicap weights: Ivory's Grab Hire 7st 3lb, Rude Awakening 6st 10lb.
BETTING: 4-1 Double Oscar, 6-1 Juwwi, Daawe, 7-1 Blue Kite, 8-1 King Of Peru, 10-1 Malibu Man, Featherstone Lane, 12-1 others

4.50 MANCHESTER SELLING STAKES (CLASS G) £2,500 3YO 1m 1f 79yds

1 412001 HEATHYARDS SHEIK (26) (CD) R Hollinshead 9 2 ... A McCarthy (3) 5
2 6-4350 ARCTIC STAR (7) M Channon 8 11 ... A Mackay 11
3 548214 BUNNIES OWN (41) J L Harris 8 11 ... R Winston (5) 3
4 400-35 CHIKAL (9) B Palling 8 11 ... T Sprake 12
5 0-5 FELONY (117) D Murray Smith 8 11 ... P Fessey (3) 4
6 653140 KATIE'S CRACKER (24) M Quinn 8 11 ... A Whelan 13
7 42140- LADY EIL (133) B Smart 8 11 ... J Stack 9
8 000- IVORY CHARM (225) K Ivory 8 6 ... Martin Dwyer 6
9 000- IVY BIRD (143) W Jarvis 8 6 ... J Quinn 7 B
10 0000-0 RUSSIAN ABOUT (24) D Thom 8 6 ... J Tate 2
11 000- SPICE GIRL (262) P Evans 8 6 ... J F Egan 8 V
12 500 SPRING BEACON (28) C Allen 8 6 ... J Weaver 10
13 000- ZEPTEPI (175) R Simpson 8 6 ... S Drowne 1
– 13 declared –
BETTING: 9-4 Arctic Star, 5-2 Heathyards Sheik, 6-1 Bunnies Own, Russian About, 10-1 Chikal, Katie's Cracker, 12-1 Lady Eil, 16-1 others

5.20 BERKELEY HANDICAP (CLASS F) £3,000 added 3YO 1m 4f

1 223336 OPERATIC (14) (C) P Evans 9 7 ... J F Egan 8 V
2 000-4 SECRECY (29) P Cole 9 5 ... Doubtful 4
3 46-5 VINCENT (28) J L Harris 9 1 ... J Weaver 7
4 0463-2 LAST LAP (29) T Easterby 8 11 ... R Winston (5) 3
5 0000-3 AFTER DAWN (23) Mrs P Dutfield 8 7 ... J Quinn 1
6 000-5 MRS PICKLES (23) M Usher 8 3 ... J Marshall 2
7 0-5400 SILVER HOPE (3) R Hollinshead 8 2 ... A McCarthy (3) 5 V
– 7 declared –
BETTING: 5-4 Last Lap, 7-2 After Dawn, 4-1 Operatic, 7-1 Mrs Pickles, 12-1 Silver Hope, 20-1 Vincent

Brighton

HYPERION
2.00 Halmanerror 2.30 Rich In Love 3.00 Action Jackson 3.30 Zomaradah 4.00 Ardent 4.30 Maladerie 5.00 Carlton

GOING: Good. STALLS: 1m 2f & 1m 4f – outside; remainder – inside.
DRAW ADVANTAGE: Low best for 5f & 6f.
● Left-hand, sharp, downland course.
● Course is E of town. Brighton station 1m. ADMISSION: Club £12; Tattersalls £8 (under-16s free); Picnic Park £4 per car (plus £4 per occupant). CAR PARK: Free.
● LEADING TRAINERS: R Hannon 30-184 (16.3%), G L Moore 26-181 (14.4%), S Dow 18-134 (13.4%), M Channon 16-107 (15%).
● LEADING JOCKEYS: T Quinn 45-178 (25.3%), Dane O'Neill 24-130 (18.5%), S Sanders 19-125 (15.2%), Pat Eddery 17-53 (32.1%).
● FAVOURITES: 208 wins from 581 races (35.8%).
BLINKERED FIRST TIME: Regal Arrow (3.30), Persevere (visored), Wedding Band (4.00).

2.00 MANNY BERNSTEIN BOOKMAKERS CLAIMING STAKES (CLASS F) £3,250 added 6f

1 033000 ROFFEY SPINNEY (30) (D) (Mrs D F Cock) R Hannon 4 9 2 ... P Dobbs (7) 1
2 144030 PLEIN GAZ (FR) (8) (D) (M R Pascall) J Bridger 5 8 12 ... G Bardwell 6
3 6-6620 THE FRISKY FARMER (9) (CD) (G J Bush) W G M Turner 5 8 12 ... D Sweeney (3) 2
4 00000- VELVET JONES (J148) (Mrs J Charles-Jones) G Charles-Jones 5 8 12 ... S Whitworth 9
5 58526- HALMANERROR (J22) (D) (Caulkheads Racing) G McCourt 8 8 10 ... T Quinn 8
6 34 LADY CARLYON (10) (J T Handman and A Allum) N Callaghan 5 8 9 ... K Fallon 3
7 -56633 LIFT BOY (USA) (59) (D) (A Moore) G L Moore 9 8 8 ... Candy Morris 7
8 044000 RIVERS MAGIC (23) (J F Waite) J Bridger 5 8 8 ... A Daly (3) 11 B
9 0-2500 BELLA'S LEGACY (23) (Vintage Services Limited) K Burke 5 8 7 ... D Harrison 4
10 050-00 SOVIET LADY (38) (Gerry Boyer) B Pearce 4 8 7 ... P Doe (5) 5
11 00-050 MOI CANARD (24) (D) (Mrs Anna L Sanders) Pat Mitchell 5 8 6 ... Amanda Sanders 10
– 11 declared –
BETTING: 9-4 Halmanerror, 4-1 Lady Carlyon, 5-1 Plein Gaz, 7-1 The Frisky Farmer, 15-2 Roffey Spinney, 8-1 Lift Boy, 10-1 Bella's Legacy, 14-1 Velvet Jones, 16-1 Soviet Lady, 20-1 others
1997: Sizzling 5 8 12 Dane O'Neill 7-2 (R Hannon) drawn (1) 12 ran

FORM GUIDE
In such a poor field Halmanerror's win at Doncaster last May and second of 22 in a six-furlong seller at Haydock in September stands out head and shoulders. If he can repeat that after an indifferent spell of hurdling, mostly in selling company, he'd beat these without breaking sweat as it's difficult to make out much of a case for the remainder. Lady Carlyon, a five-year-old mare who set foot on a racecourse for the first time on Southwell's all-weather 25 days ago, shaped reasonably well with her staying-on third in a maiden claimer over five furlongs. She was upped to a mile in a better race here ten days ago and again got going too late to trouble the leaders, finishing fourth behind Russian Party. She might be able to hold her place in the easier grade, but old LIFT BOY has a wealth of experience to call on and that must count for something at this level. While it might seem as if he is better suited by seven furlongs and possibly a mile these days, it's worth noting that he has only once won beyond six furlongs and his latest two runs on the all-weather show some of the ability is still there. Roffey Spinney would appear to need further than this six furlongs and Plein Gaz, out of his depth at Epsom last week, is the bigger danger on his two-and-a-half-length defeat of The Frisky Farmer over this trip, on the all-weather at Lingfield in February. Selection: LIFT BOY

2.30 MANNY BERNSTEIN CREDIT DIVISION LIMITED STAKES (CLASS D) £5,000 added 1m

1 18000- AUTUMN COVER (290) (CD) (G A Alexander) P Hedger 6 9 7 ... T Quinn 2
2 00-060 PERICLES (10) (Miss Gay Kelleway) Miss G Kelleway 4 9 7 ... R Ffrench 4
3 01000- RICH IN LOVE (231) (R M Cyzer) C Cyzer 4 9 4 ... K Fallon 3
4 1500-3 SAFFRON ROSE (12) (D) (Lower Bowden II Synd) M Blanshard 4 9 4 ... D Sweeney (3) 1
– 4 declared –
BETTING: 15-8 Rich In Love, 2-1 Saffron Rose, 11-4 Autumn Cover, 11-2 Pericles
1997: Sharp Shuffle 4 9 6 Dane O'Neill 10-11 fav (R Hannon) drawn (1) 5 ran

FORM GUIDE
There wouldn't be much in it between all four in a handicap and, although Saffron Rose's recent third behind the fitter Cashmere Lady and Queen's Insignia in a fillies' and mares' handicap over this trip with cut in the ground at Thirsk was a promising comeback, it's as well to remember that Autumn Cover won first time out last year and RICH IN LOVE is from a yard who's horses are really buzzing. Twice a Nottingham winner last season, Saffron Rose made a brave attempt to slip her field at Thirsk and should soon be winning, while Autumn Cover's win at Kempton on his reappearance last season was his best performance to date and gives him a leading chance if able to repeat it. Rich In Love's only real form last season was when dropped to seven furlongs (he'd been tried up to an extended 11 furlongs) at Yarmouth in August, when he made all and galloped previous winner Karinska and five others into the ground. With the stable going so well it is worth chancing he can do it again. Pericles won three times (two all-weather) last season but has yet to recapture that sort of form. Selection: RICH IN LOVE

3.00 MANNY BERNSTEIN FREEPHONE 0800 821821 HANDICAP (CLASS F) £3,500 added 1m 3f 196yds

1 222131 QUIET ARCH (42) (D) (J Davies) W Muir 5 10 0 ... Dane O'Neill 15
2 0402-3 BEHIND THE SCENES (12) (R M Cyzer) C Cyzer 4 9 13 ... K Fallon 3
3 240022 LANCER (USA) (10) (BF) (The Fijon Partnership) J Pearce 6 9 11 ... G Bardwell 11
4 /0310- ZIBETH (195) (D) (N Boyle) S Dow 4 8 10 ... P Doe (5) 13
5 16353- ROYAL LEGEND (143) (Jan Rieck) R M Flower 6 9 8 ... M Roberts 8
6 0060-0 DANEGOLD (9) (Circular Distributors Ltd) M Channon 6 9 8 ... R Hughes 4
7 03645- HEART FULL OF SOUL (J98) (Ms J Procter) P Shakespeare 4 9 8 ... Emily Joyce (7) 10
8 0000-0 FOURDANED (9) (J Falvey & Mr G Williamson) S Dow 5 9 8 ... S Sanders 9
9 5320-0 ACTION JACKSON (23) (R G Levin) B McMath 8 9 5 ... Declan O'Shea 14
10 0512-3 FLYING COLOURS (58) (Mrs R W S Baker) C Benstead 4 9 3 ... A Clark 5
11 6006-0 LIGHTNING REBEL (19) (P W Hiatt) P Hiatt 4 9 2 ... M Tebbutt 7
12 06600- ADMIRALS SECRET (USA) (163) (D) (Mrs C Wall) C Wall 9 9 1 ... J Reid 12
13 0-0340 SQUIRE'S OCCASION (J37) (D) (Chelgate PR) R Curtis 5 9 1 ... J Lowe 16 B
14 31320- COUNTRY THATCH (202) (Mrs B Sumner) C Horgan 5 8 13 ... Paul Eddery 1
15 000- JAZA (206) (P G Jacobs) N Graham 4 8 12 ... R Cochrane 17
16 00000- FORT KNOX (J17) (C) (Mrs D M Hicking) R M Flower 7 8 12 ... O Urbina 18 B
17 1003-0 HEVER GOLF EAGLE (J36) (Speedline Telecom) G L Moore 5 8 12 ... R Brisland (7) 6
18 /0500- CHILI BOUCHIER (USA) (222) (P J Pearson) D Marks 4 8 11 ... D Sweeney (3) 2
– 18 declared –
BETTING: 7-2 Quiet Arch, 7-1 Behind The Scenes, 10-1 Lancer, Flying Colours, 12-1 Zibeth, Fourdaned, Action Jackson, Admirals Secret, Squire's Occasion, Country Thatch. 14-1 others
1997 Yet Again 5 8 9 S Sanders 11-10 fav (Miss G Kelleway) drawn (7) 9 ran

FORM GUIDE
Like it or loathe it, horses with all-weather form at this stage of the season have an advantage in fitness and QUIET ARCH will be more forward than most. The Lingfield specialist – he's never won anywhere else – won for the fifth time there when driven out to beat previous scorer Amadour over this trip seven weeks ago. Quiet Arch was runner-up at Chester last June and is reasonably weighted even with ten stone on his back. Lancer, beaten pointless by Lucy Tutty in a Ripon seller on soft ground, at least ran up to that form with third-placed Monaco Gold when finding Kika too good in a claimer here ten days ago. As good as that might be in the context of this weak handicap, he has only 3lb less than Quiet Arch and doesn't seem good enough. There was almost nine months between Behind The Scenes' second to Mister Aspecto on Lingfield's Equitrack and last month's third behind Signed And Sealed on Wolverhampton's Fibresand. Both races were over two miles and he may be better suited by today's mile and a half as he failed to pull out any extra in the closing stages either time. With the stable going well he's not out of it. Zibeth won a higher-rated handicap than this at Goodwood in September. She's not had a lot of racing and probably has a good deal more scope than most of these. Selection: QUIET ARCH

3.30 MANNY BERNSTEIN EARLY PRICE MEDIAN AUCTION MAIDEN STAKES (CLASS F) £3,250 added 3YO 1m 2f

1 344- BENEVENTUS (226) (R N Khan) J Dunlop 9 0 ... Pat Eddery 5
2 6-2 BENJAMIN FRANK (17) (B Larry S Woods) 9 0 ... N Day 9
3 060- DARA KAY (290) (W A Barrett) D Cosgrove 9 0 ... M Rimmer 4
4 0- DOCKLAND EXECUTIVE (227) (Mrs L Olley) B McMath 9 0 ... Declan O'Shea 13
5 0 ELLEGANT GENT (16) (Hazzar Partnership) J Pearce 9 0 ... G Bardwell 12
6 32-3 JAMORIN DANCER (28) (Mrs L D McLardy Smith) M Jarvis 9 0 ... P Robinson 8
7 05- RED BROOK LAD (197) (Dr B H Seal) S Dow 9 0 ... M Roberts 3
8 00-0 REGAL ARROW (29) (Regal Ltd) P Shakespeare 9 0 ... C Rutter 10 B
9 600-20 WATKINS (51) (R W Savery) M A Buckley 9 0 ... K Fallon 16
10 2 ARCEVIA (6) (Kingsdown Racing) M Channon 8 9 ... R Hughes 11
11 50- DUDEEN (257) (N Boyle) T McGovern 8 9 ... S Sanders 14
12 340 EASY VIRTUE (63) (A Moore) G L Moore 8 9 ... Candy Morris 2
13 040- SHANTUNG (174) (Wetherell/Burke/Krosnsky) K McAuliffe 8 9 ... J Reid 1
14 TEA DANCER (Vintage Services Ltd) B Meehan 8 9 ... M Tebbutt 7
15 5-3 TOKAY (10) (Mrs J Wilmen) P Cole 8 9 ... T Quinn 6
16 5- ZOMARADAH (173) (Mohammed Obaid Al Maktoum) L Cumani 8 9 ... R Ffrench 15
– 16 declared –
BETTING: 6-4 Zomaradah, 7-2 Arcevia, 5-1 Beneventus, 7-1 Benjamin Frank, 9-1 Jamorin Dancer, 11-1 Tokay, 20-1 Dudeen, Easy Virtue, Shantung, Tea Dancer, 25-1 Dockland Executive, 33-1 others
1997 Heres To Home 3 9 0 W J O'Connor 3-1 (R Hannon) drawn (7) 7 ran

FORM GUIDE
Arcevia shaped nicely at Epsom last week, staying on strongly and almost getting up against Putuna over an extended mile. She'll be better suited by today's extra furlong and a half and will go close again if the race hasn't come too soon, but there are a couple of promising sorts in Beneventus and ZOMARADAH who could be a little bit better class. Beneventus gave a good account of himself in maidens at Salisbury, Newcastle and Sandown last season for Dick Hern and is now with John Dunlop's in-form team. The best has yet to be seen of him. Zomaradah had one back-end run last season and started equal third favourite in a 22-runner maiden over Doncaster's straight mile in November. He was never in it after a slow start but stayed on strongly once switched two furlongs out and came home an honourable fifth behind Eco Friendly. Double Edge, Achilles and Ribblesdale. With Eco Friendly and Achilles finishing second in recent classic trials and Ribblesdale a Nottingham winner this season that was a promising start and he should leave that far behind over this longer trip. Benjamin Frank had the rest beaten out of sight when chasing home easy winner Raffaello, Arcevia's stablemate, at Kempton 17 days. The form is difficult to assess on account of the bad ground but is probably better than Tokay's third at Folkestone. Selection: ZOMARADAH

4.00 MANNY BERNSTEIN TRADE DIVISION HANDICAP (CLASS E) (DIV I) £4,000 added 1m

1 542-21 DANDY REGENT (10) (C) (R M Cyzer) C Cyzer 4 10 6 (6ex) ... K Fallon 12
2 400-40 PERSEVERE (63) (Mrs A Rothschild) Lord Huntingdon 4 9 5 ... Dane O'Neill 4 V
3 0-6521 ARDENT (10) (CD) (R Lamb) C J Benstead 4 9 2 (6ex) ... J Reid 7
4 340040 KINGCHIP BOY (3) (CD) (Four Jays Racing Partners) M Ryan 9 8 12 ... P Robinson 2
5 0560-0 PERFECT POPPY (28) (Mrs I P Bance) S Dow 4 8 10 ... S Sanders 3
6 00-006 LA CHATELAINE (10) (C) (Blake Wales & Laycock) Miss B Sanders 4 8 9 ... A Clark 14
7 0032-0 DANCING LAWYER (66) (CD) (Vintage Services) K Burke 7 8 7 ... D Sweeney (3) 13
8 5000/0 NOT QUITE GREY (23) (D D Davies) T D Mccarthy 5 8 6 ... Paul Eddery 5
9 0350-0 MAD ALEX (29) (J P Saunders) M Haynes 5 8 3 ... G Bardwell 8
10 0020-6 WEDDING BAND (9) (Phil Costello) D Elsworth 3 8 2 ... A Daly (3) 11 B
11 45-032 GREAT CHIEF (58) (Mrs S Buckland) Bob Jones 5 8 0 ... Gemma Jones (7) 10
12 352006 FANCY DESIGN (42) (Mrs V M Harris) P Mitchell 5 7 12 ... R Ffrench 1
13 5030-0 INKWELL (J41) (P Collins) G L Moore 4 7 11 ... R Brisland (7) 6
14 60000- RUNIC SYMBOL (J22) (D Sloan) M Blanshard 7 7 10 ... C Rutter 9
– 14 declared –
Minimum weight: 7st 10lb. True handicap weight: Runic Symbol 7st 7lb.
BETTING: 3-1 Dandy Regent, 100-30 Ardent, 5-1 Kingchip Boy, 15-2 La Chatelaine, 10-1 Persevere, 12-1 Perfect Poppy, 14-1 Dancing Lawyer, Great Chief, Mad Alex, 16-1 others
1997: Boater 3 9 7 M Fenton 3-1 jt fav (D Morley) drawn (9) 9 ran

FORM GUIDE
DANDY REGENT and Ardent, both penalised 6lb for winning at the last meeting, could have a big say in matters again. Dandy Regent's penalty puts him on 10st 6lb, but he won a better race and it's difficult to know how much he might have had in hand, as he was produced with a well-timed run. He has carried on last season's progressive form and the extra furlong of today's race shouldn't be the slightest problem. Ardent has come good of late and followed an improved second to Sakharov on the all-weather at Lingfield with his win over the course and distance. Old Kingchip Boy, the Southwell all-weather specialist, almost stole that race by setting a good clip and wasn't overhauled until the final furlong. He meets Ardent 8lb better for just under four lengths and is at least entitled to finish closer, as might La Chatelaine, who was staying on in sixth and has a 6lb pull. Selection: DANDY REGENT

4.30 MANNY BERNSTEIN 21ST ANNIVERSARY HANDICAP (CLASS D) £5,000 added 6f

1 430-13 BIG BEN (9) (BF) (Lady Davis) R Hannon 4 9 10 ... P Dobbs (7) 6
2 060-00 SMOOTH SAILING (10) (A R Parrish) K McAuliffe 3 9 10 ... J Reid 3
3 204-10 SIGNS AND WONDERS (21) (R M Cyzer) C Cyzer 4 9 9 ... K Fallon 8
4 52162 DIVINE MISS-P (10) (D) (Alan Spargo Toolmakers) J Cullinan 5 9 7 ... D Sweeney (3) 2
5 00-013 THE FUGATIVE (8) (D) (J A Redmond) P Mitchell 5 9 4 ... R Ffrench 7
6 0250-5 MALADERIE (10) (D) (R M Brehaut) M Channon 4 9 2 ... T Quinn 9
7 545534 GOODBYE GATEMEN (21) (Mrs E N Nield) B Pearce 4 8 10 ... P Doe (5) 4
8 0/56-0 DESERT WARRIOR (17) (Hamad Al-Mutawa) K Mahdi 4 8 10 ... R Cochrane 10
9 60-003 STRAT'S QUEST (6) (D) (Jack Blumenow) D Arbuthnot 4 8 9 ... S Whitworth 5
10 00-550 JUSTINIANUS (10) (D) (M R Pescall) J Bridger 6 7 10 ... G Bardwell 1
– 10 declared –
BETTING: 9-4 The Fugative, 7-2 Strat's Quest, 5-1 Divine Miss-P, 6-1 Big Ben, 8-1 Signs And Wonders, 10-1 Goodbye Gatemen, 14-1 Maladerie, 16-1 Justinianus, 20-1 others
1997 Spender 8 9 9 J Reid 3-1 (P Harris) drawn (3) 9 ran

FORM GUIDE
THE FUGATIVE, under six lengths behind a fitter Divine Miss-P at Folkestone on her reappearance, made virtually all there six days later and was unlucky not to follow up at Epsom, where she finished fast after being hemmed in on the rails. She races off the same mark and is well worth another chance. Last season, The Fugative completed a rapid hat-trick, beating Justinianus at Epsom and Goodbye Gatemen at Folkestone along the way. Both have a healthy pull, but it's always worth sticking with a sprinter that's in form. Divine Miss-P ran a good race against Dande Flyer at the last meeting. Shes sure to be thereabouts again, and another danger is Strat's Quest after her run against The Gay Fox and Mister Jolson on desperate ground at Sandown last Friday. The only trouble is that it looks as if she relies more on the ground being soft than The Fugative. Seven furlongs, the distance of his recent win at Folkestone, has been Big Ben's trip for the past two seasons and he might find this a bit sharp, especially with his big weight. Selection: THE FUGATIVE

5.00 MANNY BERNSTEIN TRADE DIVISION HANDICAP (CLASS E) (DIV II) £4,000 added 1m

1 1000-0 WITH A WILL (23) (D) (H Candy) H Candy 4 9 10 ... C Rutter 10
2 600445 CONFRONTER (10) (CD) (BF) (Hatfield Ltd) S Dow 9 9 7 ... W Ryan 4
3 00-000 ROYAL CARLTON (10) (D) (Mrs Mary Doyle) G L Moore 6 9 2 ... S Whitworth 3
4 000-02 CARLTON (10) (City Slickers) G Lewis 4 9 0 ... Paul Eddery 12
5 0U043- SCOTTISH HERO (248) (Mrs L McCalla) Lady Herries 5 8 12 ... R Ffrench 5
6 0000-0 WARRIOR KING (29) (North End Partnership) J Banks 4 8 11 ... D Biggs 8
7 -4131 WITHOUT FRIENDS (58) (D) (Mrs D R Hunnisett) J Ffitch-Heyes 4 6 11 ... A Clark 9
8 0-5113 MELLORS (42) (D) (M Heaton-Ellis) M Heaton-Ellis 5 8 7 ... A Daly (3) 6
9 344011 KI CHI SAGA (USA) (21) (D) (Danny Bloor) G L Moore 6 8 6 ... Dane O'Neill 11 B
10 33000- WINDBORN (278) (C N Allen) C Allen 4 8 4 ... G Hind 7
11 003511 DIGPAST (31) (D) (Miss Sarah Jones) J Bridger 5 6 2 ... G Bardwell 1 B
12 /0500- PRESS AGAIN (237) (J Sawyer) P Hayward 6 6 0 ... P Doe (5) 14
13 4060-0 MISKIN HEIGHTS (113) (Brookright Guarding Ltd) K Burke 4 6 0 ... N Callan (7) 2
14 0-0100 GOLD CLIPPER (21) (D) (P E Axon) M Ryan 4 7 10 ... M Henry 13
– 14 declared –
Minimum weight 7st 10lb. True handicap weights: Gold Clipper 7st 9lb
BETTING: 11-4 Carlton, 7-2 Without Friends, 13-2 Digpast, 8-1 Ki Chi Saga, 10-1 Confronter, Mellors, 12-1 Royal Carlton, Warrior King, 14-1 With A Will, 16-1 others
1997 See Divison 1

FORM GUIDE
Digpast's habit of starting slowly doesn't help, but he's overcome that to win his last two starts on Lingfield's all-weather. The difference in his rating between all-weather and turf is quite staggering and he is 19lb better in compared to when Mellors beat him two lengths into third at Lingfield in February. Should Digpast reproduce his form on turf he would be a snip, though on all-known evidence that is unlikely and CARLTON will be fancied to go one better than his length second to Gay Breeze over six furlongs on testing ground at Nottingham ten days ago. He beat all those on the far side but unfortunately the winner came up the stands rail. This is more his trip and he should be too good for all-weather winners Ki Chi Saga and Without Friends. Selection: CARLTON

Top Javalin is thrown out

TOP JAVALIN was yesterday disqualified from victory in a handicap chase at Bangor last year after the prohibited substance isoxsuprine was found in the horse's drug test sample.

The Jockey Club disciplinary committee inquiry was satisfied that the substance was a course of Navilox given on veterinary advice. Nigel Hawke, Top Javalin's trainer, was fined £300 and the race was awarded to second-placed Bayerd.

● Trevor Kersey has been removed from the Forfeit List after settling debts of £834.53. The South Yorkshire trainer now hopes his re-application for a licence will be accepted.

Racing results

EXETER

2.20: 1. **ARCTIC CHANTER** (D Salter) 11-4; 2. **Monticello** 7-1. 3. **See Minnow** 50-1. 6 ran. 8-11 fav Brighstone (5th). 8, dist. (B R Millman, Cullompton). Tote: £5.30; £1.50, £2.10 DF: £8.50. CSF: £19.77.

2.55: 1. **ALBERMARLE** (S Wynne) 5-1; 2. **Zaggy Lane** 11-1; 3. **Kentish Bard** 5-1. 16 ran. 5-2 fav Phar Better. 7, ½. (T Forster, Downton). Tote: £6.40; £3.20, £3.20, £3.90. DF: £56.90. CSF: £54.67. Trio: £63.40. NRs. Silver Sirocco, Surprise Gunner.

3.30: 1. **BOLD DOLPHIN** (A Thornton) 4-6 fav; 2. **Glacial King** 25-1; 3. **River Bay** 13-8. 4 ran. 2, 3. (T Forster, Downton). Tote: £1.50 DF: £4.90. CSF: £9.72.

4.00: 1. **GRATOMI** (S Fox) 6-4 fav; 2. **Thumbs Up** 9-1; 3. **Mr Playfull** 7-2. 4 ran. 2, 7. (P Ritchens, Tidworth). Tote: £2.30. DF: £6.80. CSF: £10.53. NR: Ramstar.

4.30: 1. **SUNRISE SPECIAL** (S Burrough) 6-1; 2. **Defendtherealm** 3-1 fav; 3. **Lyphard's Fable** 10-1. 8 ran. ¾, 8. (P Rodford, Martock). Tote: £6.10; £3.20, £1.60, £3.00. DF: £16.10. CSF: £21.84. Tricast: £158.67.

5.05: 1. **SPIRIT LEVEL** (T Dascombe) 10-1; 2. **Arioso** 4-1. 3. **Miss Ondee** 15-8 fav. 7 ran. 1¼, 13. (J Payne, Newmarket). Tote: £8.80; £2.00, £2.60. DF: £9.20. CSF: £44.27. Tricast: £98.27. NR: Laytontheline.

Placepot: £753.40. Quadpot: £53.90.
Place 6: £320.71. Place 5: £110.77.

PLUMPTON

2.10: 1. **SUN ALERT** (R Thornton) 8-13 fav; 2. **Sovereign** 7-1; 3. **Certain Surprise** 9-2. 6 ran. 10, 1½. (M Pipe, Newmarket). Tote: £1.30; £1.50, £2.20. DF: £2.90. CSF: £4.36.

2.45: 1. **BROOK BEE** (D Leahy) 5-2; 2. **Baroncelli** 9-4 fav; 3. **Grey Gorden** 8-1. 6 ran. 8, ½. (N Gaselee, Upper Lambourn). Tote: £2.60; £1.90, £1.80. DF: £4.50. CSF: £7.87.

3.20: 1. **LANSDOWNE** (L Cummins) 10-11 fav; 2. **Wadada** 7-1; 3. **Hawthorne Glen** 16-1. 8 ran. 12, 8. (P Nicholls, Shepton Mallet). Tote: £1.60; £1.00, £2.00, £4.40. DF: £5.30. CSF: £7.57. Trio: £14.50. NR: Heretical Miss.

3.50: 1. **SCOBIE GIRL** (A Bates) 3-1 co fav; 2. **Early Drinker** 5-1; 3. **Native Venture** 9-1. 6 ran. 3-1 co fav Regal Aura (4th). Foodbroker Star (5th). 22, 2. (J Mullins, Andover). Tote: £4.00; £1.50, £2.50. DF: £7.30. CSF: £16.16.

4.20: 1. **STEPASIDEBOY** (J Leech) 9-4; 2. **Proceed** 2-1 fav; 3. **Fountain Bid** 13-2. 9 ran. 5, ½. (R Curtis, Epsom). Tote: £2.60; £1.20, £1.70, £3.20. DF: £5.00. CSF: £7.28. Tricast: £24.38. Trio: £16.10.

4.55: 1. **DRUM BATTLE** (J R Kavanagh) 25-1; 2. **Millmount** 11-2; 3. **Ela Agapi Mou** 2-1 fav. 8 ran. 9, ¾. (W G M Turner, Sherborne). Tote: £35.00; £7.60, £1.60, £1.90. DF: £98.50. CSF: £146.98. Tricast: £375.41.

Jackpot: £7,000.00 – part won. Pool of £3,600.92 carried forward to Brighton today.
Placepot: £43.40. Quadpot: £12.10.
Place 6: £9.72. Place 5: £7.44.

CHELTENHAM

5.25: 1. **CEDAR SQUARE** (Mr J Jukes) 3-1 jt fav; 2. **Moor Lane** 3-1 jt fav; 3. **Bel Lane** 25-1. 18 ran. 2½, 20. (V Dartnall). Tote: £4.30; £2.40, £1.50, £11.50. DF: £11.90. CSF: £11.89. Trio: £77.40.

6.00: 1. **DOUBLE THRILLER** (Mr J Tizzard) 4-1; 2. **Teeton Mill** 4-5 fav; 3. **Joy For Life** 12-1. 9 ran. 12, dist. (R Wilkins). Tote: £5.10; £1.40, £1.20, £1.50. DF: £3.90. CSF: £7.08. Trio: £9.50.

KELSO

5.45: 1. **JUST HUSH** (A Dobbin) 20-1; 2. **J J Baboo** 4-11 fav; 3. **Mo's Boy** 11-1. 10 ran. ½, 13. (R Nixon). Tote: £35.90; £3.80, £1.10, £2.90. DF: £9.30. CSF: £26.12. Trio: £37.30.

6.15: 1. **CUTHILL HOPE** (G F Ryan) 9-2; 2. **Ingletonian** 7-4 fav; 3. **Supreme Soviet** 12-1. 9 ran. 27, 11. (Mrs S Smith). Tote: £7.10; £2.80, £1.50, £2.50. DF: £5.80. CSF: £10.52. Trio: £23.50.

● *Bill Turner breathed a sigh of relief* at Plumpton yesterday when Drum Battle took the finale at 25-1. After the six-year-old had scored by nine lengths from Millmount, the Sherbourne trainer said: "That was my first win since Weather Wise at Hereford on Boxing Day. By this time last year I'd had 10 two-year-old winners. It has made me feel like packing up."

Westwood enjoying his premier status

Golf

By Andy Farrell
In Agrate Conturbia, Italy

LEE WESTWOOD, with seven victories in under two years, has spent an increasing number of Sundays in celebratory mood. Last weekend was no exception – except Westwood was at the City Ground toasting Nottingham Forest's imminent promotion to the Premiership. Having risen to No13 in the world rankings, Westwood himself is already there.

Among the congratulatory messages for his victory in the Freeport McDermott Classic in New Orleans at the start of the month was a fax from Dave Bassett and the entire Forest team, and he was able to reciprocate in person after his team's late winner against Reading. "I have to admit it was a great buzz being in the dressing room afterwards," Westwood said. "Almost as good as winning in New Orleans."

Westwood, who turned 25 last week, also has shares in Sheffield United, who look set for a play-off place. The Ryder Cup man from Worksop likes to keep his options open and is 17th on both the European and American money lists.

As far as trying to win one or the other goes, he is halving his chances by splitting his efforts on both circuits. But he has other goals in mind. "I don't feel the European money list is a priority because it's becoming more of a world tour," he said. "I am fortunate I'm exempt for all tours and can play wherever I want now."

His appearance in the Italian Open at Castelconturbia follows two weeks rest. An exhausted Westwood pulled out of the MCI Classic at Hilton Head the week after the Masters. "It was good to recharge the batteries after four stressful weeks in America," he said.

A disappointing finish of 44th at Augusta, the week after his victory in New Orleans was a let down, but not totally unexpected. "After New Orleans I wasn't really surprised I didn't play well at Augusta. It was difficult to get up for it and, physically, I was very tired as well."

Darren Clarke, who tied for eighth on his Masters debut with Tiger Woods, Colin Montgomerie and Justin Leonard, also makes his first appearance since returning from America. Bernhard Langer is not defending his title but the man he beat, Jose Maria Olazabal, is here.

The Spaniard detests finishing second more than anything and was mad at himself after losing out to Thomas Bjorn in his own national championship in Barcelona on Sunday. "Coming second always hurts a lot, especially as I was leading with four holes to play," Ollie said.

Bad clay day for Britons

Tennis

BRITAIN suffered double disappointment yesterday on clay as both Tim Henman and Greg Rusedski were knocked out of the BMW Open in Munich. Rusedski, the top seed, had little to offer in his 6-4, 6-0 loss to the world No 121 from Germany, Oliver Gross, losing his first-round match in only 53 minutes.

Henman, seeded fourth, was knocked out by the Swedish journeyman Thomas Nydahl, spending 69 minutes on court in his second-round 6-3, 6-1 defeat.

With the French Open less than a month away, Britain's top players still have a lot of work to do on the surface. Rusedski, however, was philosophical about the defeat. "I tried all the way," he said. "You have to accept these losses, they happen. There was nothing that you can do except forget about them and move on."

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The crucial difference between star quality and self-indulgence

KEN JONES

A COUPLE of months before the end of last season, when it was put to him that an injection of artistry would make it easier for Leeds United's supporters to accept that safety came at the expense of entertainment George Graham winced. "Stars, who needs them?" he muttered.

In the context of many successes and the languid style that marked him as a player, Graham's remark carried a lesson for Premier League owners, middle-class latecomers in the audience and occasional contributors to the sports pages of our newspapers.

What Graham meant is that the true stars of football are models of consistent application not merely decorative. Pele, whose career is the most dazzling the the game has ever known, exemplified this fully.

Shortly before the 1974 World Cup finals, when, at 34, he resisted pressure to come out of retirement from international football, I saw Pele put in a great effort against Belo Horizonte in one of his last games for Santos. "People may say that technically Pele was not so good or that he missed some goals he should have scored," he said. "But never in my 25 years as a player could anyone say Pele does not run in the field... you have a responsibility to the others in your team and to the public because the public pays you."

In the dubious belief that they will succeed where others have failed, otherwise astute managers sometimes fall into the trap of signing gifted players who do not share the attitude that was central to Pele's unmatched reputation. For example, nothing is more likely to have ended Brian Little's reign at Villa Park than the faith he put in Stan Collymore whose potential remains dormant.

Because managers are expected to assemble teams that are both successful and appealing a reported confrontation between Sir John Hall and disgruntled Newcastle United supporters following last week's defeat at Tottenham suggests that Kenny Dalglish had better look beyond an appearance in the FA Cup final and the four points needed to be sure of avoiding relegation.

Expressing disappointment over his club's league predicament and a prosaic method, Hall is said to have promised a revival of the style that brought Newcastle widespread popularity.

From long experience I find that sport is a better area than most to look for the truth. The truth about Newcastle is that when Dalglish succeeded Kevin Keegan halfway through last season he inherited a recent history of exciting underachievement. In attempting to put this right he has produced a team that isn't one thing or another. Even if Newcastle win the FA Cup there will be a blight on their season.

An important thing to know about Dalglish is that he played for managers, Jock Stein at Celtic and Bob Paisley at Liverpool, who had no patience with self-indulgence. Dalglish brought great ability to the game but in common with all great players he could be relied on for a maximum effort.

In attempting to strike a balance between style and endeavour the best managers are ruthless in assessment of players whose spectacular interventions are diminished by irresponsibility.

The biliousness with which many Newcastle supporters regard Dalglish pays no account to the problem of working for a club that has never achieved enough to support the idea of a sleeping giant.

It simply cannot be imagined that Dalglish will be persuaded to hire players who do not meet his insistence on sustained collective involvement simply to pacify disaffected supporters who probably yearn for the entertainment David Ginola and Tino Asprilla provided.

Ginola's rejection by France for the World Cup finals, thought disgraceful by some English critics, is not as difficult to understand as the recent application of his gifts in Tottenham's midfield may suggest. It isn't so much that Ginola is considered a luxury as that the team is made vulnerable by his extravagance.

On television last week I watched Juventus play Internazionale, a thrilling match that made nonsense of claims put forward for our Premiership and put stardom into its proper perspective. It isn't that Leeds and Newcastle United don't need stars but that term has been devalued by gaps in education.

England are told to control their clubs

Rugby Union

DICK McGRUTHER, the Australian Rugby Union chairman criticised the English rugby establishment yesterday, demanding that they pull their clubs into line after three years of inertia.

"It's up to you England, you're supposed to be able to control your clubs and your players," he said.

"England just sat back after the game went professional in 1995 and allowed privately-owned clubs to come in and sign up players, not only their own, but other countries' players as well.

"The southern hemisphere nations got in in 1995 and signed up players on a national and provincial basis.

"It seems to me that we were pointed in the direction of professional rugby in the early 1990s leading up to 1995 and here we are still battling England on the issue.

"They just didn't take sufficient action. We all had some hard times to get through and now three years later we see the problems of that inactivity."

McGruther was speaking ahead of the International Rugby Board executive's emergency meeting with Rugby Football Union officials in Dublin on 18 May in a bid to solve the continued club versus country stand-off.

"The IRB has decided enough is enough," said McGruther, who will take his place at the Dublin meeting as an IRB committee chairman.

The IRB has threatened England with expulsion unless they can sort out the problem and the decisions by the clubs to keep players from England, Scotland and Ireland out of the forthcoming southern hemisphere tours has angered the ARU as well as New Zealand and South African rugby.

Richard Yerbury, the London Scottish chief executive, yesterday confirmed the Exiles are considering moving to Edinburgh in order to attract bigger crowds.

Currently in third place in the Second Division after last Saturday's 11-10 defeat to West Hartlepool, their closest rivals for a promotion place, the Exiles may now have to rely on a play-off with First Division bottom-club Bristol.

While any move may yet come unstuck due to the RFU's regulations concerning member clubs having to play in England, Yerbury insists the possibility of hosting the likes of Bath and Newcastle in the capital is very much alive.

"It is true, we are looking at options in that direction," he said, "although they are still in the early stages."

"There are several hurdles that have to be overcome, and the RFU would have to be consulted and agree to it.

"The English Rugby Partnership (who control the club game in England) would also need to be involved.

"The opportunity to have top club rugby up in Scotland with a side that is predominantly Scottish can only be good news."

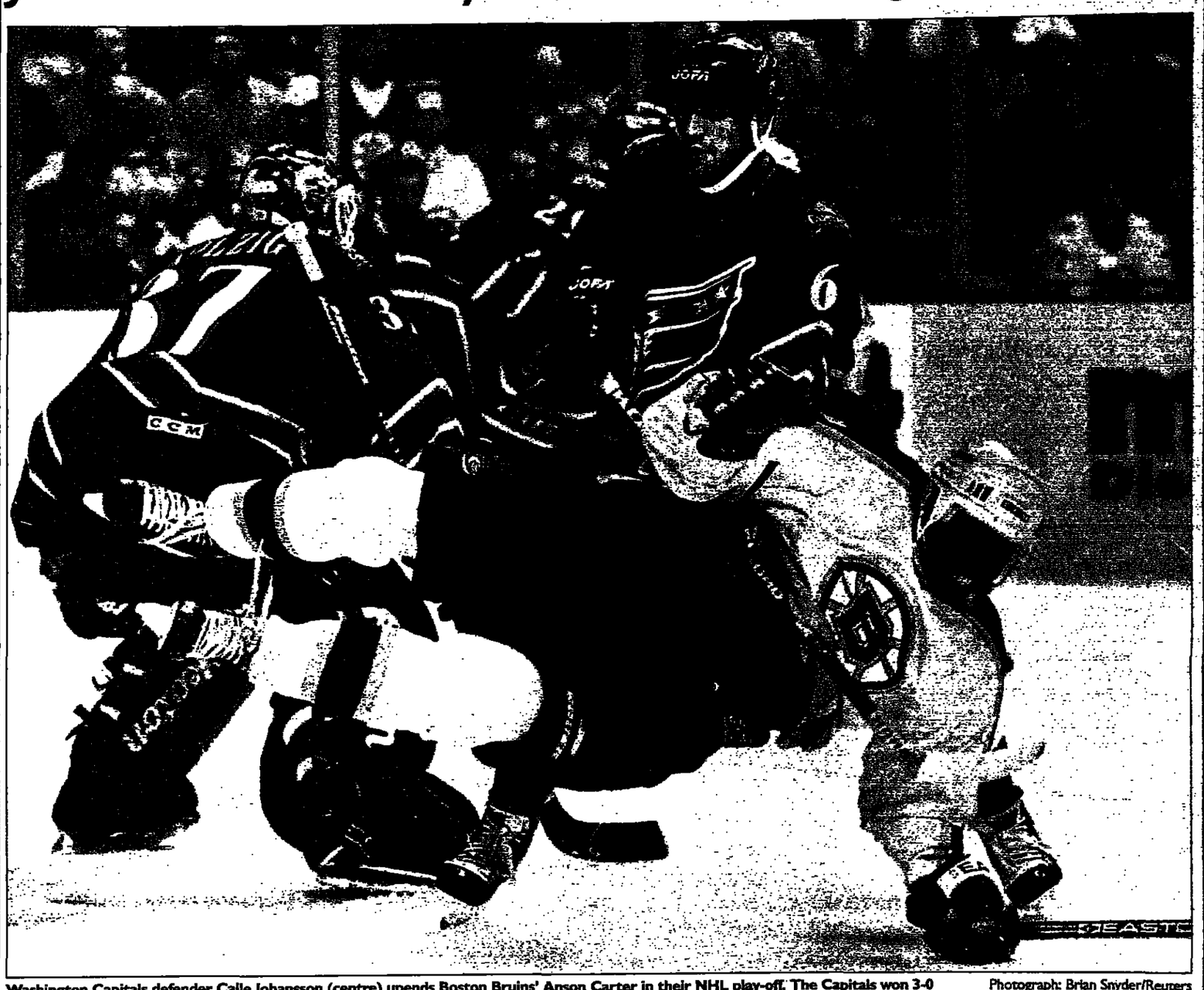
Yerbury cited the current debate over Cardiff's possible entry into the Allied Dunbar Premiership as a legitimate precedent for clubs in one country being able to compete in different leagues.

"I know they are meeting a lot of resistance from the WRU but it is certainly not the case with the First Division clubs, who are enthusiastic about the idea.

"If Cardiff were allowed to compete in England, then the potential for us doing the same from Scotland is certainly worth airing.

"We certainly need to address how we get more people to watch our rugby. At the moment, our crowds are around 1,000 to 1,500, although we could probably expect to get over 4,000 if we are promoted."

Johansson is clearly determined to get Carter



Washington Capitals defender Calle Johansson (centre) upends Boston Bruins' Anson Carter in their NHL play-off. The Capitals won 3-0 Photograph: Brian Snyder/Reuters

Jardine and Burns going Down Under

IAN JARDINE, the Stirling County centre, and Graeme Burns, the Watsonians scrum-half, were yesterday named to fill the final two places in Scotland's 35-strong squad for this summer's tour to Fiji and Australia.

The experienced Jardine got the nod ahead of his team-mate James McLaren for the remaining midfield berth, having proved his fitness in County's last three matches following a season heavily disrupted by injury.

The 32-year-old has toured the southern hemisphere twice even though it is two years since he won the last of his 17 caps in New Zealand.

He will provide a welcome backbone of experience with the other three centres in the party – Ronnie Eriksson, Cammy Murray and David Officer – having only four caps between them.

Burns came on as a replacement for the last 10 minutes of Watsonians' Tennents Premiership play-off win over West of Scotland and has satisfied Scottish Rugby Union medical officials of his fitness.

Scotland leave on 18 May for a one-off Test in Fiji before seven matches, including two Tests, in Australia.

Three Irish referees – Dave McHugh, Alan Lewis and Bertie Smith – have been selected to handle forthcoming major international matches under the International Rugby Board's new merit-based pilot scheme.

McHugh will be in charge of the Bledisloe Cup game between New Zealand and Australia in Auckland on 25 August while Smith will referee the World Cup qualifier between Morocco and the Ivory Coast on 19 September.

Lewis's first international in charge will be the World Cup qualifying tie between Australia and Fiji in Sydney on 18 September.

Durrant may go to England

Football

THE departing Rangers hero Ian Durrant looks set for a move to England after admitting he could never play against the club he has served since he was a schoolboy.

The former Scotland midfielder waved a tearful goodbye on Tuesday to the Ibrox fans who have watched his progress since his first-team debut as a skinny 18-year-old back in 1985.

After bidding farewell in a 2-2 draw with Sheffield Wednesday during his testimonial celebrations, Durrant has now set his sights on securing his footballing future over the coming weeks.

The Govan-born player, still only 31 despite a career that was blighted by two-and-a-half years out of the game with a serious knee injury, seems to veering away from a move across the Atlantic.

"I would rather move out of Scotland because I wouldn't fancy coming back here and playing against Rangers," Durrant said.

"I think I have missed the boat as far as playing in Europe is concerned, although I would have loved to at one time.

"I've had an offer from San Jose and the other American team that are interested are from Boston. America is still a possibility but a move down south is another option and that is looking more likely at the moment."

Despite an impressive display against Ron Atkinson's side, in which he scored to spark a second-half fightback, Durrant is virtually resigned to being on the sidelines as Rangers aim to beat Kilmarnock at Ibrox on Saturday and turn up the heat on their title rivals, Celtic.

"After the way the boys played last week at Hearts, it is hard to see the gaffer changing the team," he said.

"It was the first time I have got 90 minutes for a long time and I really enjoyed it, especially against quality players like Paolo di Canio and Benito Carbone.

"But I don't think there will many changes for this Saturday, so it was probably my last appearance at Ibrox."

Instead, Durrant was philosophical about his task as he looks forward to life away from Rangers for the first time in his career.

"I have had a lot of highs here and it is sad that it is coming to an end," he said.

"There will be a few tears shed but life goes on and now I've got last night out of the way I can hopefully get myself sorted out for the future."

Gregory keen to sort out contracts

THE Aston Villa manager, John Gregory, has given the five players whose contracts expire at the end of next season a 1 June deadline to decide on their future.

Gregory has opened talks with Mark Bosnich, Mark Draper, Julian Joachim, Gary Charles and Riccardo Scimeca, whose current deals run out in the summer of 1999. The Villa manager is determined that negotiations will not drag on into next season and has said he will start looking for replacements if the five players fail to give him a decision.

Gregory is keen to avoid the scenario of the current campaign which has seen the future of Steve Staunton, who can leave on a free transfer under the Bosman ruling, still undecided as the season draws to a close. "The situation I don't want is to go away on my holidays this summer worrying and wondering about having to come back and facing players who haven't signed new deals," Gregory said.

Staunton has pledged to inform Gregory where his future lies by the beginning of June. He has been offered a deal which would make him Villa's highest-paid player.

Villa's Yugoslav striker Savo Milosevic is attracting the interest of the Spanish club, Real Zaragoza. Gregory has rejected a player-exchange offer and is looking for a straight cash deal at about £4m.

The Italian club, Udinese, are also understood to be keeping tabs on Milosevic.

Villa have leaint that they will be playing a side from either Croatia, Denmark or Turkey if they are accepted into the Intertoto Cup this summer. Teams from Croatia and Denmark will meet each other in the first round, with the winners of that tie then being paired with the representatives from Turkey. Then the winners of that game will take on Mr Gregory's side in the first round – with the first leg on the weekend of 18-19 July and the return encounter on 25 July.

Blades' manager seeks more bottle

THE Sheffield United manager, Steve Thompson, is urging his side to display the same spirit against Crewe tonight as they did on Tuesday at Tranmere.

Thompson and the Blades fans went through agony as Rovers took a 3-1 lead before two goals from Dean Saunders and Paul Devlin in the final 12 minutes helped snatch a point to keep their play-off dreams alive. The trip to Gresty Road will represent United's third game in six days, with Thompson admitting the crippling sequence of crunch games is far from awkward.

"Awkward? It's going to be murder," claimed the Blades manager. "But we've got to get on with it and keep going. I just think my experience in life has helped me fight back. I am an eternal optimist and we've got to keep going and get the results. Whatever happens on Thursday it [the draw at Tranmere] means Birmingham have got to win as we have got a point more now."

Crewe welcome back Marcus Bignot from a one-match suspension as a replacement for the teenage full-back David Wright, but the midfielder Chris Lightfoot is out after damaging ankle ligaments.

Gareth Whalley is doubtful with a back problem, but the Nigerian goalkeeper Ademole Bankole retains his place despite Jason Kearton's return to training. Crewe's manager, Dario Gradi, said: "We won't be able to make excuses that they're not trying, so it's a good test for us."

Football results

TUESDAY'S LATE RESULTS: Nationwide Football League First Division: Ipswich 2 Sunderland 0; Tranmere 3 Sheffield Utd 3. Second Division: Oldham 3 Burnley 3; Watford 2 Bournemouth 1. GM Vauxhall Conference: Hayes 3 Woking 0; Morecambe 3 Stalybridge 1; Rushden 0 Welling 1; Slough 1 Leek 1; Southport 1 Telford 2; Yeovil 4 Dover 1. Rymco League Premier Division: Boreham Wood 2 Aylesbury 1; Enfield 1 Bromley 1. First Division: Barton 0 Staines 0; Grays 1 Whyteleafe 1; Hampton 1 Maidenhead 0; Worthing 0 Romford 4. Second Division: Banstead 5 Tilbury 2; Edgware 0 Wealdstone 2; Egham 2 Cheshunt 2; Hungerford 1 Canvey Island 1; Leighton 1 Wivenhoe 3; Tooting & Mitcham 0 Chalfont St Peter 3. Third Division: Dorking 1 Camberley 4; East Thurrock 1 Clapton 0. Dr Martens League Premier Division: Gresley Rovers 0 Cambridge City 1. Midland Division: Solihull 0 Grantham 5. Southern Division: Baldock 3 Cinderford 2; Clevedon 0 Weymouth 3; Tonbridge 2 Havant 1. Unibond League First Division: Matlock 0 Belper 3. Unibond First Division Cup final: Lincoln Utd 1 Trafford 3. Winstonlead Kent League First Division: Beckenham 0 Swanley Furness 1; Crey Wanderers 3 Crockenhill 0; Folkestone Invicta 0 Canterbury 1; Greenwich Borough 1 Corinthian 0; Herne Bay 2 Sheppey 3; Hythe 3 Lordswood 1. North West Counties League First Division: Burscough 1 Ramsbottom 0; Holker Old Boys 2 Haslingden 0; Mossley 1 Maine Road 1; Warrington 0 Clitheroe 0. Uniport United Counties League Premier Division: Eynesbury 0 Boston Town 2; Potton 1 Mirless Blackstone 1; Stotfold 1 Wellingborough 2; Desborough 2 Buckingham Town 0. Jewson Eastern League Premier Division: Warboys 1 Halstead 0; Soham Town Rangers 5 Clacton 6. Unilet Sussex County League First Division: Burgess Hill 4 Langney Sports 1; Portfield 0 Horsham YMCA 4; Ringmar 1 Seaford 3; Wick 1 Hassocks 1. Northern Counties East League Premier Division: Armthorpe 0 Liversedge 0; Eccleshill 2 Sheffield 2; Glasshoughton 0 North Ferriby 2; Hucknall 3 Selby 0; Pickering 1 Maltby 3. INTERLINK EXPRESS MIDLAND ALLIANCE: Barwell 1 Boldmere St Michaels 0; Kings Norton 0 Bloxwich 0; Oldbury 2 Knypersley 1. Screwfix Direct League Premier Division: Blackwell 1 Elmore 2; Bridgwater 2 Barnstaple 1; Westbury 0 Odd Down 2; Pontins League First Division: Manchester City 3 Notts County 3. Second Division: Rochdale 2 Shrewsbury 3. Avon Insurance Combination: First Division: Oxford Utd 0 Crystal Palace 1. Irish League Coca-Cola Football Cup final: Cliftonville 0 Linfield 2. Belgian League: Harelbeke 3 Germinal Ekeren 1. European Under-18 Championship (Scotland) Group A: Denmark 0 Greece 0; Sweden 1 Iceland 1. Group B: Liechenstein 0 Portugal 1; Norway 1 Italy 4. Group C: Republic of Ireland 2 Finland 0; Scotland 1 Spain 1. Group D: Israel 1 Ukraine 1; Russia 0 Croatia 0. Testimonial Matches: Ian Durrant: Rangers 2 (Durrant, Albertz) Sheffield Wednesday 2 (Carbone, Di Canio). Mark O'Connor: Gillingham 1 (Fortune-West) Tottenham 3 (Sellars 2, Sinton).

هكذا من الأصل

...nson and Hedges Cup: Fine start for Northamptonshire's new-boy while Lancashire are foiled by spinner

Rose rewrites bowling record

By Jon Culley
at Luton

Minor Counties 103
Northamptonshire 104-5
Northants won by five wickets

IT WAS not quite the stroll they anticipated when Minor Counties were eight down for 62, but Northamptonshire eventually reaped the reward for Franklyn Rose's explosive Benson and Hedges Cup debut in suburban Luton yesterday.

The Jamaican pace bowler took five wickets for 14 runs and pulled off a stunning run-out. In a low-scoring game he had no serious challenge for the Gold Award, although 39-year-old Paul Newman, once of Derbyshire, made a bold bid by removing the first three batsmen as Northamptonshire, needing just 104, stumbled to 26 for 3.

Rose's figures were the best by a Northamptonshire bowler in the 27-year history of the competition, removing Sarfraz Nawaz (5-21 against Middlesex in 1980) from the county records in its final year. His arm was also good for a direct hit from fine leg to run out Phil Nicholson.

After Steve Dean had helpfully miscued to mid-off, Rose dismissed Carl Rogers and former Surrey batsman David Ward, now with Hertfordshire, with consecutive deliveries, clipping the latter's off-stump with a ball that deviated markedly. Mark Fell survived the hat-trick attempt but did not win a long stay of execution, gloving a catch to David Ripley as Minor Counties tottered to 13 for 4.

There was never any hint of a genuine recovery, although Andy Roberts mounted some resistance with 25 against his former county and David Pennett, released by Nottinghamshire, managed a feisty unbeaten 26.

Rose finished them off with the first ball of his last permitted over, enjoying kinder luck than his new colleague, Devon Malcolm, who sent down 30 deliveries before he conceded a run but finished his stint wicketless.

Northamptonshire passed the target with almost 18 overs to spare, although their progress was not entirely straightforward. Kevin Curran juggled his batting order, partly on account of an injury to Mal Loye, but the decision to open with Rose was not a success.

Rose swatted one disrespectful six off Pennett but it was hardly surprising that his timing was awry. Newman showed he too could exploit the pitch and Northamptonshire found themselves in a degree of trouble at 39 for 4. However, Curran's 28 and Tony Penberthy's unbeaten 34 ensured there was no upset.

Minor Counties' Phil Nicholson glances the ball past David Ripley as his side struggle against Northamptonshire at Luton yesterday Photograph: Peter Jay

Nerveless Lara combats Wasim

By Mike Carey
at Old Trafford

Warwickshire 234-8
Lancashire 185
Warwickshire won by 49 runs

AMONG many old Lancashire traditions is one which decrees that a new captain does not have to wait long for his first crisis. Wasim Akram discovered this yesterday but for once his explosive batting – in this case 31 from 28 balls – failed to change the course of events in this Benson & Hedges group match.

Warwickshire earned a win that was eventually very comfortable, if only for the sheer nerve of Brian Lara, who boldly employed both his spinners when a Wasim onslaught was Lancashire's last hope. Many another leader would have panicked and turned to seam.

Subtlety looks like being one of Lara's strong qualities as a leader, as he suggested in the Caribbean recently. Having seen his off-spinner Neil Smith dispatched a very long way for two sixes by Wasim, his response was to call up his left-arm spinner Ashley Giles.

In theory, it should have been even easier for the left-handed Wasim to assault Giles with the tide, as the saying goes; but almost immediately a sweep lobbed into the air off a remote part of the bat, Ed Giddins swooped to hold the catch and Warwickshire knew they were home.

Giles' controlled bowling, allied to the crucial 37 he made from 38 balls at the end of the Warwickshire innings, made him an undisputed man of the match while Lancashire were left to analyse how they had managed dissipate a potentially winning position.

While Mike Watkinson anchored the innings, John Crawley's half-century from 58 balls left them needing only 127 from 27 overs with nine wickets standing.

But after Lara recalled Giddins, who bowled Watkinson, Crawley could make only four from 21 balls in the next nine overs as partners came and went and the initiative was lost.

Before all that Warwickshire must have wondered if their batting had done enough on a pitch which, used for the recent watery contest against Middlesex, sometimes offered movement off the seam and occasionally enough bounce for Wasim to retain a slip for half the innings.

No one managed the lengthy innings required. Glen Chapple found enough movement to bowl Nick Knight and Lara, invariably an uncertain starter, was leg-before to one from Ian Austin that nipped back.

David Hemp's 55 from 81 balls helped to settle things down before he fell to a good one from Peter Martin at which point Giles, appearing at 152 for 5, coolly accepted the responsibility of giving his side something to defend.

Post-Gatting era starts well

By David Llewellyn
at Lord's

Middlesex 283-5
Sussex 277
Middlesex won by six runs

IT HUNG on a knife edge for quite some time as an unlikely lad, Keith Newell of Sussex, waded into the Middlesex attack and took his side perilously close to extending an unenviable run by the home side.

But in the end Middlesex managed something that has eluded them for three years in the Benson & Hedges Cup. Their narrow victory was their first over a first class county since they reached the quarter-finals in 1995.

They lost all four matches last year, including a defeat against Ireland. Their solitary win in 1996 was provided for them courtesy of British Universities.

Yesterday the home side achieved victory without one of the key figures of recent times. Eras come and eras go and at Lord's yesterday it appeared that Middlesex fans had seen the end of a particularly distinguished one – their team took the field without Michael William Gatting.

After 21 years of outstanding service in the 50-over competition, the broad bat – and back – will not be seen in the shorter game.

It is one century Gatting is apparently happy to eschew. His previous 96 appearances in the Cup have produced almost 3,000 runs, but this summer the former England and Middlesex captain is content to leave everything to the youngsters.

As policies go it is commendable. In practice it nearly backfired. If it had not been for another old head in the shape of Keith Brown, Middlesex could well have lost after the Sussex lower order picked up from where their captain Chris Adams had left off earlier on and went for their shots.

Fortunately Richard Johnson and Paul Weekes recovered their poise and managed to regain their stranglehold, and the 22 runs Sussex needed off the final two overs proved to be just beyond them.

All the same Newell's unbeaten 62 was a serious challenger to Brown's Gold Award-winning 114. The Sussex all-rounder scored at a run a ball, smacking two sixes and a handful of boundaries.

Adams too looked good while thumping an authoritative half century. The Australian Michael Bevan's Sussex debut ended on 36 when he fell to captain Mark Ramprakash's first ball.

Brown was altogether more sedate, as befits one of the game's elder statesmen. He began slowly, which is not quite the idea of the pinch-hitter, but he picked up the tempo the deeper into the Middlesex innings he got. He shared in a stand of 120 with Weekes (66 not out) and having taken strike, was out to the last delivery, having shown the youngsters the way in between.

Two-horse race for captaincy

By Mark Baldwin

THE chairman of selectors, David Graveney, confirmed yesterday that the England captaincy will go to either Alec Stewart or Nasser Hussain.

The appointment will be announced at Lord's next Tuesday and Graveney's assertion that the final decision still remains "a close call" will be heartening, particularly for current vice-captain Hussain. Informed opinion within cricket circles has suggested that Stewart is almost certain to be the man named by Graveney and his fellow selectors, Graham Gooch and Mike Gatting.

Other names players were also under consideration. "We've looked at various candidates, all of them with strong claims," Graveney said.

He added: "We're meeting a couple more times this week, and I think you can say the choice is between Alec and Nasser. It's a close call between the two. Both of them have been long-term vice-captains and both would be in our strongest team.

"What we've done is go with the Australian method. I think we need to look at the sort of team we want to field against South Africa this summer and both are leading players."

The question of Stewart's role in the team, as specialist opening batsman or wicket-keeper-batsman, also seems to be playing a major part in the deliberations of Graveney's panel.

"Alec's workload needs to be looked at. We have to decide whether being given the captaincy would dilute the role of either as a player. A big consideration for us is the balance of our side."

Missing cheques worrys union

Rugby League

By Dave Hadfield

THE players' trade union is investigating claims that some of its members are not receiving contract payments they are owed by Super League in Australia.

Players who became surplus to requirements in Australia and whose wages are still partly paid by the organisation, which has been absorbed into the new National Rugby League, have tried without success to contact it about their missing cheques.

"We are looking into this on our members' behalf and we will back them to the hilt," Nic Grimoldby, the chairman of the Rugby League Players' Association, said.

Castleford's Jason Critchley has been cleared of pushing over the referee, Karl Kirkpatrick, during their match at Halifax on Sunday.

Kirkpatrick placed Critchley on report because he was unsure whether the collision was deliberate, but the League has ruled that it was accidental and that the Great Britain tour winger has no case to answer.

The Leeds prop, Martin Masella, has also been told that he is in the clear over an incident in the victory over Salford, but the Hull forward, Jason Temu, must face the disciplinary committee today over allegations of a high tackle in the match against Bradford.

Wigan have joined the chorus of disapproval over Leeds' ploy of loaning their suspended prop forward, Barrie McDermott, to Bramley so that he can serve his ban in time to face them in the Super League clash on 15 May. "They are making a mockery of the system," said the Wigan chairman, Mike Nolan.

"Nothing will happen to stop them, because it is Wigan involved."

Silk Cut, which is on the point of renewing its sponsorship of the Challenge Cup, is again offering a prize of £10,000 to any player who scores a hat-trick in Saturday's final. The prize was first won by Bradford's Robbie Paul in 1986.

TODAY'S NUMBER

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THE number of spot kicks required to settle a penalty shoot-out in a football match in Australia this week. The Gap beat Rocklea 22-21 on penalties after a 3-3 draw in a Queensland Federation Ansett Cup tie in Brisbane. No spot kick was saved or missed except the final one, from Rocklea's Tom Novach.

Cricket scoreboard

Benson and Hedges Cup
...day

Lancashire v Warwickshire
OLD TRAFFORD: Warwickshire (2pts) won by 49 runs.
Warwickshire won toss
WARWICKSHIRE
N V Knight b Chapple ... 33
N M K Smith c Wasim b Martin ... 18
D L Hemp c Hegg b Martin ... 55
*B C Lara lbw b Austin ... 13
T L Penney c Atherton b Chapple ... 17
D R Brown b Wasim ... 9
A F Giles c Watkinson b Wasim ... 37
G Welch c Martin b Chapple ... 16
†K J Piper not out ... 13
G C Small not out ... 2
Extras (lb4, w11, nb6) ... 21
Total (for 8, 50 overs) ... 234
Fall: 1-33, 2-75, 3-101, 4-133, 5-151, 6-172, 7-198, 8-224.
Did not bat: E S H Giddins.
Bowling: Wasim 10-0-35-2; Martin 10-0-60-2; Chapple 10-0-40-3; Austin 10-0-51-1, Yates 10-0-44-0.
LANCASHIRE
M A Atherton c Piper b Giddins ... 11
M Watkinson b Giddins ... 34
J P Crawley lbw b Smith ... 54
A Flintoff lbw b Small ... 1
G D Lloyd c Brown b Small ... 18
*Wasim Akram c Giddins b Giles ... 31
†W K Hegg c Piper b Smith ... 0
I D Austin st Piper b Giles ... 5
G Yates not out ... 5
G Chapple c Giles b Giddins ... 3
P J Martin b Giles ... 4
Extras (lb15, w6) ... 21
Total (45.1 overs) ... 185
Fall: 1-25, 2-108, 3-110, 4-128, 5-132, 6-134, 7-159, 8-172, 9-179.
Bowling: Giddins 10-1-35-3; Brown 7-0-32-0; Giles 7.1-2-22-3; Small 10-0-39-2; Smith 10-0-35-2; Welch 1-0-7-0.
Umpires: V A Holder and G Sharp.

Middlesex v Sussex
LORD'S: Middlesex (2pts) win by six runs.
Sussex won toss
MIDDLESEX
†K R Brown c Moores b Edwards ... 114
J L Langer b Edwards ... 3
*M R Ramprakash c Adams b Robinson ... 29
J C Pooley lbw b Lewry ... 20
O A Shah c Moores b Robinson ... 17
P N Weekes not out ... 66
Extras (b3, lb12, w9, nb10) ... 34
Total (for 5, 50 overs) ... 283
Fall: 1-6, 2-73, 3-124, 4-163, 5-283.
Did not bat: D C Nash, R L Johnson, J P Hewitt, A R C Fraser, T F Bloomfield.
Bowling: Lewry 10-0-42-1; Edwards 10-0-55-2; Jarvis 10-0-51-0; Robinson 10-1-55-2; Davis 5-0-32-0; Newell 5-0-33-0.
SUSSEX
*C J Adams c Brown b Fraser ... 54
A D Edwards lbw b Johnson ... 20
K Greenfield c Weekes b Johnson ... 0
J Carpenter b Ramprakash ... 31
M G Bevan b Ramprakash ... 36
†P Moores run out ... 14
K Newell not out ... 62
P W Jarvis b Johnson ... 18
R P Davis c Shah b Weekes ... 16
J D Lewry b Weekes ... 3
M A Robinson b Weekes ... 0
Extras (lb18, w5, nb4) ... 25
Total (50 overs) ... 277
Fall: 1-74, 2-78, 3-79, 4-145, 5-183, 6-197, 7-223, 8-252, 9-277.
Bowling: Fraser 10-1-48-1; Hewitt 5-0-35-0; Weekes 10-0-42-3; Johnson 10-0-64-3; Bloomfield 6-0-32-0; Ramprakash 8-0-39-2.
Umpires: H D Bird and B Leadbeater.

Glamorgan v Essex
Essex won toss
CARDIFF: Match abandoned. Glamorgan 1pt, Essex 1pt.
GLAMORGAN
S P James b Ilott ... 71
R D B Croft st Rollins b Grayson ... 77
A Dale run out ... 7
*M P Maynard run out ... 55
P A Cottey c Rollins b Ilott ... 7
G P Butcher not out ... 13
†A D Shaw not out ... 10
Extras (lb11, w3) ... 14
Total (for 5, 46.2 overs) ... 254
Fall: 1-116, 2-128, 3-214, 4-227, 5-241.
Did not bat: Waqar Younis, S D Thomas, S L Watkin, D A Cosker.
Bowling: Ilott 8.2-0-48-2; Cowan 10-0-60-0; Napier 3-0-25-0; Irani 5-0-35-0; Grayson 10-0-32-1; Such 10-0-43-0.
ESSEX: D D J Robinson, S G Law, *N Hussain, R C Irani, S D Peters, A P Grayson, G R Napier, †R J Rollins, M C Ilott, A P Cowan, P M Such.
Umpires: G Burgess and N Plews.

Minor Counties v Northants
LUTON: Northamptonshire (2pts) win by five wickets.
Northamptonshire won toss
MINOR COUNTIES
*S J Dean c Curran b Rose ... 0
C J Rogers c Capel b Rose ... 1
L Potter b Penberthy ... 10
D M Ward b Rose ... 0
M A Fell c Ripley b Rose ... 8
A R Roberts c Ripley b Snape ... 25
R N Dalton b Curran ... 0
P G Newman lbw b Swann ... 7
†P J Nicholson run out ... 15
D B Pennett not out ... 26
A Richardson c Curran b Rose ... 1
Extras (lb4, w6, nb2) ... 12
Total (49.1 overs) ... 103
Fall: 1-1, 2-4, 3-4, 4-13, 5-27, 6-32, 7-55, 8-62, 9-98.
Bowling: Malcolm 10-5-18-0; Rose 9.1-3-14-5; Curran 7-2-10-1; Penberthy 6-0-18-1; Capel 2-0-2-0; Snape 9-1-23-1; Swann 6-0-14-1
NORTHAMPTONSHIRE
F A Rose c Potter b Newman ... 15
D J Capel c Potter b Newman ... 10
J N Snape c Roberts b Newman ... 1
*K M Curran c Roberts b Richardson ... 28
R J Bailey b Pennett ... 4
A L Penberthy not out ... 34
M B Loye not out ... 3
Extras (b2, w7) ... 9
Total (for 5, 32.2 overs) ... 104
Fall: 1-18, 2-26, 3-26, 4-39, 5-91.
Did not bat: R R Montgomerie, G P Swann, †D Ripley, D E Malcolm.
Bowling: Newman 8-2-19-3; Pennett 10-2-30-1; Potter 5-1-13-0; Richardson 6-1-16-1; Dalton 3.2-0-24-0.
Umpires: R Palmer and J F Steele.
SECOND XI CHAMPIONSHIP: Knowle & Dorridge (second day of four): Warwickshire 313 (M J Powell 151, M Piggott 4-54); Hampshire 212 for 4 (D Kenway 83). Saffron Walden (first day of three): Kent 134 (R W T Key 68; D G Wilson 4-33), Essex 120 for 2. Hinckley (second day of three): Leicester 266 for 8 dec (D I Stevens 122) and 15 for 0; Gloucestershire 206 for 8 dec (M J Church 101no, K G Howarth 4-53). Eastbourne (first day of three): Sussex 305 (M T E Peirce 132, R K Rao 66; G M Roberts 6-124); Derbyshire 53-1.

Today's fixtures
BENSON & HEDGES CUP (One-day: 11.0) Taunton: Somerset v British Universities. The Oval: Surrey v Gloucestershire. AON TROPHY (One-day, 11.0): Old Trafford: Lancashire v Yorkshire.

Today's fixtures

Football
7.30 unless stated
NATIONWIDE FOOTBALL LEAGUE FIRST DIVISION
Crewe v Sheffield Utd (7.45)
GM VAUXHALL CONFERENCE
Leek Town v Yeovil (7.45)
Southport v Dover (7.45)
Slough v Stalybridge (7.45)
RYMAN LEAGUE Premier Division: Chesham v Boreham Wood; Oxford City v Kingstonian (7.45). First Division: Barton Rovers v Leatherhead; Berkhamsted v Hampton. Second Division: Banstead v Leighton. Third Division: Clapton v Dorking.
UNIBOND LEAGUE President's Cup final, second leg: Runcorn (2) v Guiseley (1).
DR MARTENS LEAGUE Premier Division: Halesowen v Bath (7.45). Midland Division: Redditch v Stourbridge. Southern Division: Witney v Tonbridge.
ARNOTT INSURANCE NORTHERN LEAGUE First Division: Easington v Tow Law
JEWSON EASTERN LEAGUE Premier Division: Gorleston v Soham.
JEWSON WESSEX LEAGUE: Romsey v Wimborne.
INTERLINK EXPRESS MIDLAND ALLIANCE: Barwell v Stratford; Chasetown v Willenhall.
NORTH WEST COUNTIES LEAGUE First Division: Haslingden v St Helens; Kidsgrove v Burscough; Ramsbottom v Holker Old Boys.
SCREWFIX DIRECT LEAGUE Premier Division: Bridport v Bristol Manor Farm; Bridgwater v Brislington; Odd Down v Westbury; Tiverton v Melksham; Barnstaple v Bideford.
UHLSPORT UNITED COUNTIES LEAGUE Premier Division: Buckingham Town v Stamford.
WINSTONLEAD KENT LEAGUE First Division: Crockenhill v Erith Town; Lordswood v Swanley Furness; VCD Athletic v Cray; Tunbridge Wells v Chatham.
PONTINS LEAGUE Premier Division: Everton v Preston (7.0) (at Widnes RLFC). First Division: Bolton v Notts County (7.0); Middlesbrough v Coventry (7.0).
AVON INSURANCE COMBINATION First Division: Queen's Park Rangers v Millwall (2.0); Brighton v Crystal Palace (2.0) (at Crystal Palace Training Ground); Tottenham v Watford (2.0).
UEFA UNDER-16 CHAMPIONSHIP Group A: Ireland v Denmark (at St Mirren Park, Paisley); Sweden v Greece (at Broadwood Stadium, Cumbernauld). Group B: Italy v Liechtenstein (at Almondvale Stadium, Livingston); Norway v Portugal (at Fir Park, Motherwell). Group C: Finland v Scotland (at McDiarmid Park, Perth); Republic of Ireland v Spain (at Forthbank Stadium, Stirling). Group D: Israel v Croatia (at Victoria Park, Dingwall); Ukraine v Russia (at Caledonian Stadium, Inverness).

Speedway
ELITE LEAGUE: Ipswich v Wolverhampton (7.30).
SPEEDWAY STAR CUP: Swindon v Belle Vue (7.30).
PREMIER LEAGUE CUP: Sheffield v Berwick (7.45).

Other sports
SNOOKER: Embassy World Championship (Crucible Theatre, Sheffield).

Sporting digest

Athletics
The career of Jan Zelezny, the javelin world record holder and two-time Olympic champion, is in jeopardy after he hurt his ankle and shoulder in training last Thursday and had to undergo surgery in Prague the following day.

Baseball
AMERICAN LEAGUE: Oakland 4 Tampa Bay 3; Detroit 7 Boston 5; Anaheim 8 Baltimore 5; Cleveland 4 Chicago White Sox 1, Toronto 6 New York Yankees 2; Seattle 5 Kansas City 1, Texas 7 Minnesota 2.
NATIONAL LEAGUE: San Francisco 2 Pittsburgh 1; Houston 4 NY Mets 3 (10 innings); Philadelphia 11 Cincinnati 8 (10 innings); Colorado 8 Florida 7, Atlanta 12 Arizona 2; Los Angeles 6 Milwaukee 3; San Diego 7 Chicago Cubs 3. Postponed: St Louis v Montreal.

Basketball
NBA Play-offs first round: Eastern Conference: Miami 91 New York 85 (Miami lead best-of-five series 2-1); Atlanta 96 Charlotte 64 (Charlotte lead 2-1). Western Conference: Minnesota 98 Seattle 90 (Minnesota lead 2-1); Portland 99 LA Lakers 94 (Los Angeles lead 2-1)

Boxing
Scotland's Keith Knox is to fight for the Commonwealth flyweight title on 1 June. The Bonnyrigg boxer will meet Alfonso Zvenyika at the St Andrew's Sporting Club, Glasgow.
PROFESSIONAL PROMOTION (Ulster Hall, Belfast): Vacant International Boxing Organisation inter-continental cruiserweight championship: D Corbett (Belfast) bt K Ochrey (Uk) rsf 4th. Vacant IBO inter-continental super-featherweight championship: I McLeod (Kilmarnock) bt P Gallagher (London) rsf 7th. Middleweight: D Ryan (Raphoe) bt W Shepherd (Carlisle) disq 4th. Light-middleweight: D Abrahams (Watford) bt J Webb (Belfast) rsf 2nd. Light-welterweight: G McClarnon (Lurgan) bt B Robb (Telford) rsf 2nd. Bantamweight: T Waite (Belfast) bt S Quinn (Newtownards) rsf 3rd.

Cricket
Craig Spearman has won a surprise recall to the New Zealand squad for the three-Test tour of Sri Lanka next month. The Kiwis will also play a limited-overs series against Sri Lanka and India, which is the key to Spearman's selection. Following the late withdrawal of the limited-overs specialist Llorne Howell through injury, Spearman edged out the promising Wellington opener Matthew Bell and the proven Test performer Blair Pocock for the vacant top order batting place. The other top-order batting positions went to Matthew Horne and Bryan Young. Three spinners were chosen with the veteran left-armer Mark Priest and the right arm off spinner Paul Wiseman in the team to back up Daniel Vettori.
NEW ZEALAND SQUAD (for tour of Sri Lanka, May): S P Fleming (capt), B A Young, M J Horne, C M Spearman, N J Astle, C D McMillan, C L Cairns, C Z Harris, A C Parore, D J Nash, D Vettori, M W Priest, P J Wiseman, S B Doull, S B O'Connor.

Cycling
GIRO DEL TRITONE RACE Third stage (180.7km, Tione to Torri del Benaco, It): 1 M Menzoni (It) 4hr 21min 4sec; 2 Z Spruch (Pol); 3 A Ferrigato (It); 4 T Prem (Aut); 5 P Savoldelli (It); 6 D Da Paoli (It); 7 R Vansteins (Lith); 8 F Puttini (It); 9 F Proietti (It); 10 P Lanfranchi (It) all same time. Overall: 1 Savoldelli 13hr 41min 1sec; 2 D Frigo (It) +24sec; 3 F Casagrande (It) +26; 4 M Pantani (It) +27; 5 D Clavero (Sp) +33; 6 A Shefer (Kazak); 7 W Belli (It); 8 P Tonkov (Rus) all s/t; 9 E Zaina (It) + 1min 50sec; 10 G Guerini (It) +2:19.

Equestrianism
A possible jackpot of £20,000 will be on offer from British Equestrian Insurance Brokers during the inaugural Hickstead Eventing Grand Prix on 7 and 8 July. The victor in next month's Badminton Horse Trials can claim the reward by also winning the Hickstead contest. Should the Eventing Grand Prix be won by one of the three participating show jumpers, Michael Whitaker, William Funnell and Peter Charles, he would have to win the British Jumping Derby in August in order to collect the jackpot.

Golf
The US Masters champion, Mark O'Meara, has admitted he may have broken the rules of golf on his way to winning the Lancôme Trophy in Paris last September. According to the European Tour's chief referee John Paramor, a video of O'Meara putting on the 15th green in the final round appears to show him marking his ball and then replacing it closer to the hole. If the incident had come to light at the time, Paramor says the 41-year-old American would almost certainly have been either disqualified or, if he had not signed his card, been given a two-stroke penalty.
One shot will be worth £62,000 at the Standard Life Loch Lomond tournament from 8 to 11 July. The prize is on offer for a hole-in-one at the 205-yard 17th in the final round. The Swede Pierre Fulke scored an ace in last year's event, although that came at the eighth hole on the opening day. Tom Lehman has already confirmed he will be defending the title he won by five strokes last year.

Ice hockey
NHL Play-offs first-round: Eastern Conference: Ottawa 4 New Jersey 3 (Ottawa lead best-of-seven series 3-1); Washington 3 Boston 0 (Washington lead 3-1). Western Conference: San Jose 1 Dallas 0 (od) (series level at 2-2). Detroit 4 Phoenix 2 (series level at 2-2); Colorado 3 Edmonton 1 (Colorado lead series 3-1).

Pools dividends
LITTLEWOODS Treble chance: 24pts £330,421.80, 23 £1302.40, 22 £60.00, 21 £16.90. Half-time: 24pts £5554.50. Four draws £9.65. Nine homes £2,364.00. Five aways £44.15.
VERNONS Treble Chance: 24pts £56,056.00. 23 £243.35. 22 £92.20.
ZETTERS Treble chance: 24pts £10,383.55. 23 £70.70. 22 £4.25. 21 £0.50. Four aways £4.00. Eight homes £568.50. Four draws £9.00. All Draws treble chance (from 15) 24pts £30.15. 23 £1.45. Fair Five £28.50. Lucky numbers 25-26-32-23-3-29.

Rugby League
Reading Town Football Club, relegated to the Second Division and due to move to a new stadium next season, are investigating the possibility of applying for a Super League franchise.
The Swinton full-back Mark Welsby is expected to be out for two months with a broken jaw he sustained in Sunday's 20-18 First Division defeat at Keighley.
Oldham have signed the 29-year-old Fijian forward Joe Nadiole from Featherstone Rovers for an undisclosed fee. The former Huddersfield player, brother of the former Oldham forward Tom Nadiole, has agreed a deal which runs to 31 December.

Rugby Union
TUESDAY'S LATE RESULTS: Allied Dunbar Premiership One: Bath 20 London Irish 3. Welsh National League First Division: Pontypool 23 Cross Keys 14; Treorchy 31 UWIC 14

Snooker
EMBASSY WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP (The Crucible, Sheffield) Quarter-finals: J Higgins (Sco) bt J Parrott (Eng) 13-11; K Doherty (Ire) bt M Stevens (Wal) 13-10.

Table tennis
EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIPS (Eindhoven, Neth) Men's team final: France 4 Poland 3. Men's singles qualifying, first round: T Young (Eng) bt D Foretorov (Bri) 21-16 21-17. B Billington (Eng) bt I Tavukcuoglu (Tur) 21-9 21-10. Second round: E Varin (Fr) bt T Young (Eng) 18-21 21-16 27-25; Kalun Yu (Neth) bt B Billington (Eng) 23-21 18-21 21-14.

Tennis
BMW MEN'S OPEN (Munich) Singles, first round: T Enqvist (Swe) beat M Norman (Swe) 7-5 6-3; M Rosset (Swit) bt T Haas (Ger) 6-3 6-7 6-4; A Agassi (US) bt T Woodbridge (Aus) 6-1 3-6 6-3; R Schuttler (Ger) bt M Woodforde (Aus) 6-4 7-6, O Gross (Ger) bt G Rusedski (GB) 6-4 6-0. Second round: T Nydahl (Swe) bt T Henman (GB) 6-3 6-1; M Gustafsson (Swe) bt G Kuerten (Bra) 7-6 6-3, G Blanco (Sp) bt G Mandl (Aut) 6-4 6-2; N Escude (Fr) bt M Philippoussis (Aus) 6-4 7-5.
CZECH MEN'S OPEN (Prague) Singles, first round: P Korda (Cz Rep) bt P Kralert (Cz Rep) 6-2 6-1, M Sinner (Ger) bt T Nurminen (Fin) 6-2 4-6 6-3, M Tabara (Cz Rep) bt R Fromberg (Aus) 7-6 2-6 7-5; J Diaz (Sp) bt M Filippini (Urug) 6-2 6-4; R Furlan (It) bt C Pioline (Fr) 0-6 6-1 6-2, C Dosedel (Cz Rep) bt S Schalken (Neth) 2-6 7-6 6-1, A Chesnokov (Rus) bt J Tarango (US) 7-6 6-3; G Schaller (Aut) bt M Goellner (Ger) 7-6 6-1. Second round: F Meligeni (Bra) bt Y Kafelnikov (Rus) 6-4 6-4, J Sanchez (Sp) bt R Vasek (Cz Rep) 7-6 6-1, D Pescariu (Rom) bt M Tabara (Cz Rep) 6-3 6-2, A Chesnokov (Rus) bt A Portas (Sp) 6-4 6-0.
AT&T MEN'S CHALLENGE (Atlanta, Georgia) Singles, first round: P Sampras (US) bt A O'Brien (US) 6-2 7-6, M Carlsson (Bra) bt J Courier (US) 6-3 2-6 6-4, R Delgado (Par) bt J Antonio Marin (Sp) 6-4 6-2, A Pavel (Rom) bt S Sargsian (Arm) 6-4 6-4, F Squillari (Arg) bt M Tillstrom (Swe) 6-3 6-3, S Campbell (US) bt S Lareau (Can) 6-3 6-4, M Washington (US) bt M Tebbutt (Aus) 6-0 6-0; A Calatrava (Sp) bt G Stafford (SA) 4-6 6-2 6-4, R Reneberg (US) bt A Hernandez (Mex) 6-3 6-1.
WTA CROATIAN OPEN (Bol, Croa) Singles, first round: J Kruger (SA) bt I Selyutina (Kazak) 6-3 6-4; P Suarez (Arg) bt G Leon-Garcia (Sp) 4-6 6-3 7-5; C Black (Zim) bt D Krstulovic (Croa) 6-4 6-2, M Diaz-Oliva (Arg) bt D Chladkova (Cz Rep) 6-3 7-6; T Panova (Rus) bt M A Sanchez-Lorenzo (Sp) 6-2 6-4; M J Fernandez (US) bt F Lubiani (It) 6-2 7-6; M Lucic (Croa) bt K Brandi (US) 6-2 3-6 7-5. Second round: M Diaz-Oliva (Arg) bt S Kleinova (Cz Rep) 7-6 6-1; L Ghirardi-Rubbi (Fr) bt T Panova (Rus) 6-2 6-0.
WTA HAMBURG OPEN Singles, First round: A-G Sidot (Fr) bt K Habsudova (Slovak) 6-3 6-3; J Abe (Ger) bt P Hy-Boulais (Can) 6-1 6-3; V Ruano-Pascal (Sp) bt R Bobkova (Cz Rep) 6-3 6-1, S Noorlander (Neth) bt R Dragomir (Rom) 6-2 6-2; P Schnyder (Swit) bt F Perfetti (It) 6-1 6-0. Second round: M Hingis (Swit) bt J Halard-Decugis (Fr) 7-5 6-1; J Novotna (Cz Rep) bt M Serna (Sp) 6-4 6-2.
LTA WOMEN'S TOURNAMENT (Hatfield) Singles, first round: J Pullin (GB) bt E Lebecond (Fr) 7-6 6-2, E Erbova (Cz Rep) bt K Karner (Ger) 6-0 6-2; J Moore (GB) bt H Crook (GB) 6-1 4-6 6-0, S Sfar (Tun) bt N Payne (GB) 7-5 6-4, C Contin (Arg) bt K Marent (Aus) 6-3 6-4; D Muscolino (Arg) bt E Krutko (Lat) 6-2 6-1; M Ramon (Sp) bt S Loogen (Ger) 6-2 6-1; P Van Acker (Bel) bt C Seal (GB) 6-0 6-1, N Egorova (Rus) bt S Tastard (Fr) 6-1 3-6 6-4; P Garcia (Sp) bt H Reesby (GB) 6-2 6-2; L Jeffs (GB) bt K Elliott (GB) 6-4 6-4; J Halbauer (Ger) bt L Lanmer (GB) 6-3 6-3; C Dewinne (Fr) bt A Janes (GB) 4-6 6-3 6-1; J Choudhury (GB) bt K Warne-Holland (GB) 6-3 6-3, L Cartwright (GB) bt L Gabia (Isr) 6-0 3-6 6-1; L Ahl (GB) bt L Perkins (GB) 6-3 6-4.

Doherty going about his business quietly

Snooker

By Guy Hodgson
at The Crucible, Sheffield

WHILE the attention has been set unwaveringly on Jimmy White for 10 days, Ken Doherty has been quietly making progress at the Embassy World Championship. The Whirlwind was blowing at the front yesterday but nipping into the semi-finals through the back door was the reigning champion.

Doherty defeated Matthew Stevens 13-10 and is just two matches away from retaining his title which, if it sounds run of the mill, was beyond Steve Davis and Stephen Hendry when they first became world champions. You never know, he might get some publicity.

Not that he was craving it yesterday. "I prefer it that way to be honest," he said. "I've got to the semi-finals without too much notice and it suits me. I'm doing my own thing like I did last year and, at the end of the day, the tournament is more important that the media attention.

"Jimmy has done wonders for the tournament. It's put snooker back up there where it was in the Eighties and early Nineties when it was at its peak. When he plays well, it's good for the sport."

Doherty was quiet yesterday, hushed by the dogged persistence of the 20-year-old Stevens who tugged him back every time Doherty tried to make a break for the line. The score was like two snails inching up the table: 9-7, 9-8, 10-8, 10-9 until the Irishman finally put some daylight between himself and his follower with breaks of 53 and 70 in the 20th and 21st frames.

Even then Stevens, who was in his first quarter-final, managed to drag the score to 12-10 before Doherty finally squashed this irritant with a 73. "Ken didn't really play that well," Stevens, from Carmarthen, said, "but he did enough. I don't think I put enough pressure on him."

Thanks to White's all embracing presence there has not been that much pressure on John Higgins either, which is a surprise because he might displace Hendry at the top of the world rankings. If he takes the trophy next Monday he will end eight years of Hendry supremacy and so far there is little reason to believe he will be far away.

Higgins, who has won three tournaments this year, beat the 1991 champion John Parrott 13-11 yesterday to get past the quarter-finals at the Crucible for the first time. He is playing well and if his opponent had not also been firing on all cylinders we might have witnessed a rout yesterday.

Level at 8-8 overnight, Higgins suggested he had ordered rocket fuel instead of eggs and bacon because he came flying out of the traps. He had finished the previous evening with his 100th century in competition and within 22 minutes of the 10am restart he had recorded two more, clearances of 143 and 139.

Which had the statisticians moving almost as quickly as the white ball as his hat-trick of 100s was the first in the history of the World Championship and took the total for this tournament to 49, which is also a record. You would have expected the 22-year-old to be excited but when he got to his chair he had the audacity to yawn. The audacity of youth.

Parrott, who had every reason to be dismayed, turned to his opponent and asked: "Are you allowed to have those before breakfast?" and, for a while, Higgins seemed a little unsure of himself. "I couldn't get my head right," he said. "I was delighted with the two breaks but I was all over the place. It was very tough, I'm still shaking."

Parrott won the next three frames and led 11-10 before Higgins pulled himself together. "He'll take a fair bit of stopping," Parrott said. "Ken Doherty's going along quietly, minding his own business, but I tipped John before the start of the tournament and I've seen nothing to change that."

As for White, his 7-1 deficit overnight suggested his tournament was over although he tried manfully to drag himself back into his match yesterday. Ronnie O'Sullivan played like the quarter-final was over because he had his most fitful session of the championships so far, wasting chances, going for unlikely shots and, in his own words "losing it".

For most of the afternoon he sat in his chair smiling ironically at his own carelessness, but he just got away with it thanks to a break of 55 in the final frame of the session, making the score 10-6 when it could easily have been 9-7. He required only three frames last night.

Noades takes on manager's role at Palace

Football

By Rupert Metcalf

THE Crystal Palace chairman, Ron Noades, yesterday took over control of first-team affairs at the south London club until the end of the season – after Attilio Lombardo stepped down from his position as player-manager.

Noades and the coach, Ray Lewington, will pick the team for Palace's last three games. Monday's 3-0 home defeat to Manchester United confirmed their relegation to the Nationwide League.

Lombardo was not Noades' choice as manager when Steve Coppell gave up control. The former Italian international has been criticised by the chairman for his team selection, but he had been expected to stay on until the end of the season.

However, Lombardo said that he felt there was "no point in him carrying on in the management role" following relegation, and he would now revert to playing only.

Noades' long-term position at the club is by no means clear. A computer tycoon, Mark Goldberg, is still trying to complete his planned £30m takeover. The former England coach, Terry Venables, has been lined up by Goldberg to take charge of team affairs next season, but Noades is known to have wanted Gerry Francis, the former Tottenham manager, in the Selhurst hot seat.

The temporary appointment of Lombardo, who speaks little English, with Tomas Brolin, the Swedish international, as his interpreter had made Palace something of a laughing-stock. Now the club's fans must be hoping for a more settled summer and subsequent season in the First Division but, with so much uncertainty hovering over Selhurst Park, they may be out of luck.

A statement issued by the Palace board read: "Palace wish to make it clear that they appreciate Lombardo's efforts to avoid relegation and thank him for stepping into the breach. Brian Sparrow will continue in his coaching role and all other coaching positions within the club remain the same. The team have three Premiership fixtures left. Noades and Lewington will jointly pick the team for these games."

Paul Jewell is set to be named as Bradford City's manager on a two-year contract.

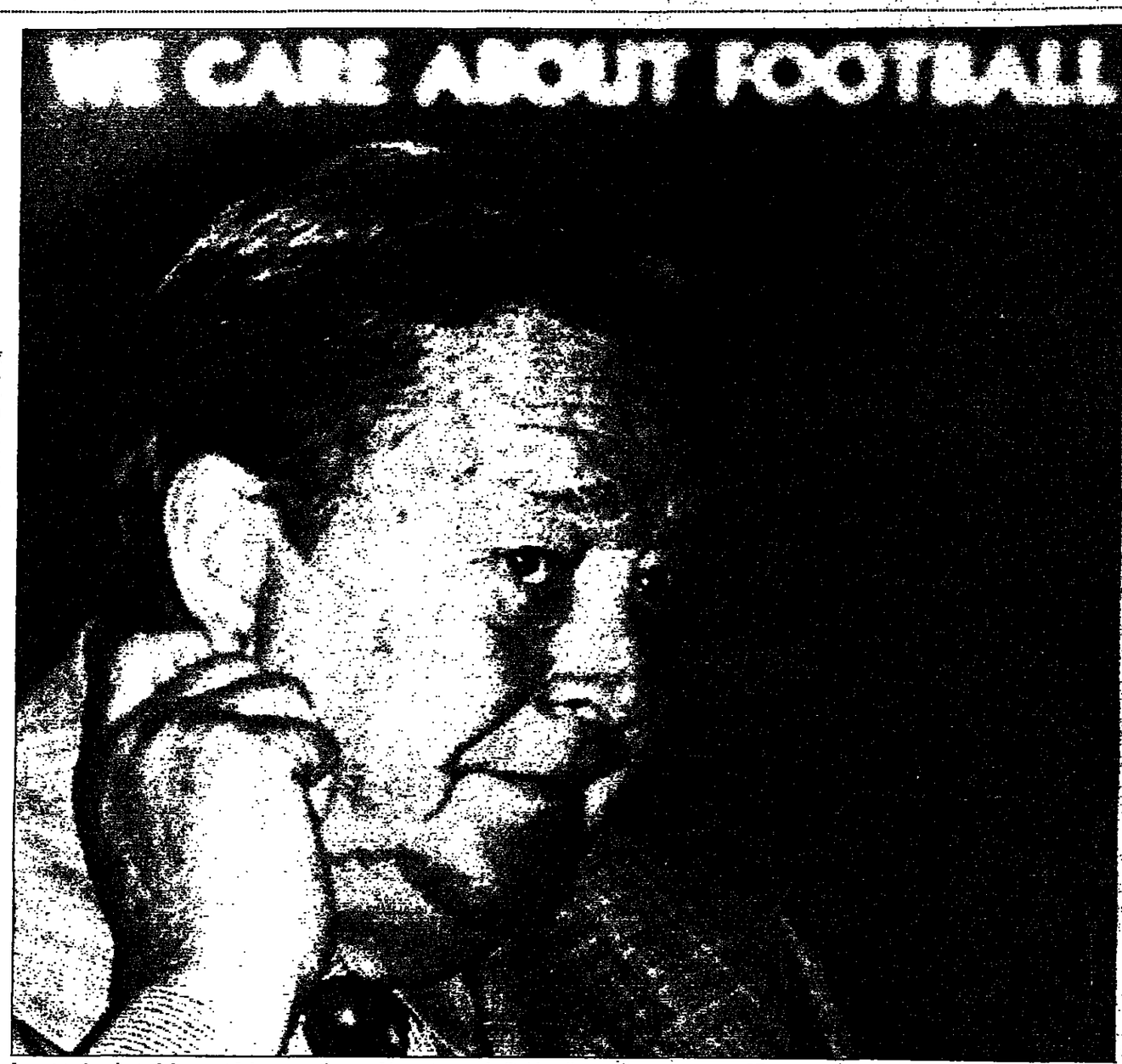
Jewell has been in charge since Chris Kamara was sacked in January, but the First Division club have since been linked with several other potential managers, including Neil Warnock, the original choice of their chairman, Geoffrey Richmond. Warnock is now expected to sign on at Oldham Athletic for another year.

Benfica have been ordered by Fifa to pay Manchester United the missing transfer fee for Karel Poborsky inside 30 days. Football's world ruling body intervened because United have still not received any of the £2m they agreed with the Portuguese club for the Czech international at the end of December.

Trevor Francis, currently working on a one-year rollover contract as the manager of Birmingham City, is seeking a new long-term deal.

Stoke City have launched the biggest security operation in the club's history for Sunday's First Division relegation showdown against Manchester City. There are fears that as many as 3,000 fans from Maine Road have bought tickets in areas reserved for home supporters.

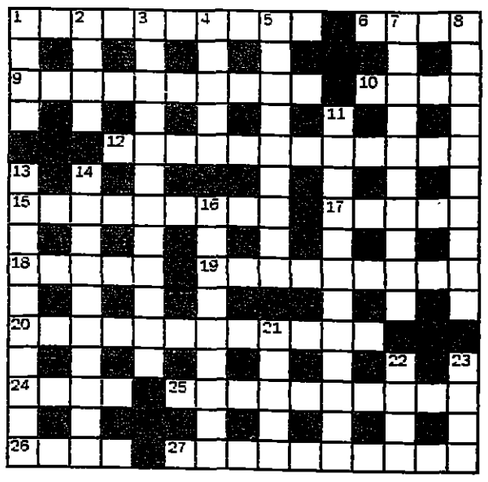
Thousands of England and Scotland fans will be able to watch their country's World Cup games via two big screens to be sited in London and Glasgow. The Nescafé-sponsored "United in The Park" events will be taking place at Alexandra Palace in London and Bellahouston Park, Glasgow, with both venues able to accommodate up to 20,000 spectators.



I want to be elected: Lennart Johansson, the president of Uefa, in Dublin yesterday at a congress of European football's governing body. Johansson is hoping to become the next president of Fifa, the game's world governing body. The election takes place in June Photograph: John Cogill/AP

THE INDEPENDENT CROSSWORD

No. 3598, Thursday 30 April — By Spurius



Wednesday's solution

C	A	T	N	A	P		K	I	N	G	S	T	O	N
A		R		M		F		N		R		R		I
S	T	O	N	E	W	A	L	L		A	L	A	R	M
H		U		R		L		O		I		M		R
F	A	N	C	I	E	S		C	A	L	Y	P	S	O
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E		H		E		E		S		E		O		A
M	I	S	T	R	E	S	S		D	R	Y	R	O	T

ACROSS

1 Staff signature required (6,4)
6 Short delivery capturing one's wicket? Not entirely (4)
9 Spanish aunt wearing fashionable fur is very greedy (10)
10 Lead sometimes is, or iron (4)
12 Opener's autograph on the score sheet? (3,9)
15 Bustling – not Lemnos, it's sleepy (9)
17 Ring seen in department store (5)
18 American and European mostly get on together (5)
19 Shy site foreman is finally working to get building up (9)
20 Protocol sure is flexible in one of the media used by advertisers (6, 6)
24 Peer behind organ loft, but not frequently (4)
25 Sort of fare provided for the bloated, perhaps? (5,5)
26 Hurry, having taken wrong turning (4)
27 What's tinny about hacking artist, financially insecure? (10)

DOWN

1 Having dog takes time and trouble (4)
2 Part of Chelsea not mentioned hitherto (4)
3 Desk accessory that's usually dear (6, 6)
4 Men covering for inferior members in western films? (5)
5 Graceful enrolled nurse repeatedly comes around to give information (9)
7 Sour apple stewed with a dash of lemon – it's so versatile (3-7)
8 Noted writer? (10)
11 It's tough to take responsibility - you'll find that, by the way (4,8)
13 Steep slope where ten campers come to grief (10)
14 Shows he can manage (10)
16 Tranquil seat of learning? (4-5)
21 Flowering tree – phone up about one (5)
22 Game supplied by well-known Venetian merchant (4)
23 Intelligence shown by bridge players (4)

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Bassett to add depth to Forest's quality

THE Nottingham Forest manager, Dave Bassett, whose side clinched a return to the Premiership without kicking a ball, believes they have the quality to survive in the top flight.

Sunderland's 2-0 defeat at Ipswich on Tuesday ensured that Forest will go back up after one season in the First Division, the seventh time Bassett has led a side to promotion.

The former Wimbledon manager learned that Forest had gone up while commentating for television of Tranmere's home encounter with Sheffield United.

"It's a great feeling but this has been a unique season in that we would have normally been celebrating some time ago after getting to the 90-point mark," he said. "I can't remember another year like this where four teams [Forest, Sunderland, Middlesbrough, Charlton] have had to get 87 to 90 points just to have a chance of going up.

"The form of the four teams in the latter part of the season has been outstanding and no-one has been able to ease up and it has been quite a tense period. I was looking at a two points a game average and to be honest I thought that we would cruise it. For it to go to the last week of the season is unbelievable.

"It's been a long hard season and there has been that expectancy level at Forest to go up because they feel they should be a Premiership club.

"But we are there at last and everyone will be looking forward with great relish to next season.

"But before then we want to finish this season in style at West Brom on Saturday and the players want to go up as champions."

Bassett, who was promoted four times with Wimbledon and twice with Sheffield United, will meet the Forest board on Friday to find out what funds will be made available to him to bring new blood into the City Ground.

But he said: "I think we have the nucleus of a side that can compete in the Premiership. People like Scot Gemmill, Steve Chettle, Colin Cooper, etc, have shown in previous years that they can compete at the top level.

"Things went off the rails last season when the club went down but in fairness there were some decent players here who were just going through a difficult time.

"With the new ones that have come in and put pressure on – like Dave Beasant, Pierre Van Hooijdonk, Andy Johnson and Geoff Thomas – we've had a decent side.

"We have got a certain amount of quality in the team but I still want a bit more strength and competition. In the Premier League you have got to have a big squad.

"I think that was highlighted in February when we had a whole midfield missing in Steve Stone, Ian Woan, Chris Bart-Williams and Scot Gemmill. You do need that depth.

"But I have to say I thought the Forest team that started the season was better than the Crystal Palace team I was involved with last season which eventually got promoted. That's not being disrespectful to Palace but I think there are better quality players in this side."

Leeds United's record signing, Lee Sharpe, yesterday ruled out a dream return to the side and a confrontation with his former club, Manchester United, on Monday.

The £4.5m winger has missed the entire season after sustaining a knee ligament injury last summer and there were hopes he could be fit for the match at Old Trafford.

But Sharpe now has his sights set on being ready for Leeds' pre-season campaign, despite a couple of reserve team appearances under his belt as he heads along the road to a full recovery.

He said: "I have ruled out even a place on the bench against Manchester United. It will be disappointing, as it has been to miss all the other matches this season.

"I have come to terms with the fact that I won't be playing first-team football this season. That's the sensible outlook.

"Maybe I could have rushed back but there was no point in taking any risks. I have just got to make sure that I am fit for the pre-season games, then I will be flying for the start of next season."

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